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**A NEW GUIDE**

**to**

**AFGHANISTAN**

*by*

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**Professor of History, Kabul University**

**and author of**

**Progressive Afghanistan, Guide to Afghanistan,  
Commercial Afghanistan, A New Guide to Afghanistan,  
Aryana or Ancient Afghanistan, Afghanistan—An  
Historical Sketch, Customs and Manners of the Afghans  
and  
Afghanistan—The National Awakening**

**With one map and fifty-five illustrations**

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**His Majesty Mohammed Zahir Shah King of Afghanistan**

His Majesty King Mohammed Zahir Shah was born in Kabul on October 15, 1914. Studied first at Habibia and Istiqlal Schools, Kabul. In July 1924 proceeded to France for higher education and studied at the following institutions :

Jeanson de Sally College

Pasteur College

Montpellier School

In 1930 His Majesty returned to Afghanistan and underwent military training in Kabul. During the reign of his father was appointed acting minister of the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Education. The last post he held until the martyrdom of his father on November 8, 1933.

## **Preface to Third Edition**

The second edition of this book appeared in November, 1955. It was given such a warm welcome by readers in and outside Afghanistan that all copies were sold out within three months.

Unfortunately, in that edition the author was unable to check the proofs for corrections. This time strenuous efforts have been made to remedy those defects. The present edition has been thoroughly revised and a number of alterations have been made. I have freely and gratefully availed myself of information and suggestions furnished by friends, readers and Government officials since the initial appearance of this book. In response to one suggestion made by my esteemed friend, Dr. Harold Amoss of Asia Foundation, this edition has been enriched by the addition of a new chapter—An Historical Sketch.

This New Guide and Brief Survey is destined to meet the needs of the casual tourist as well as of the more serious visitor who wishes to have a simple, rounded background on Afghanistan.

I desire to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who have taken an interest in the compilation of this new edition and who have aided me with their useful advice and suggestions. Special mention is to be made of the help given by Mr. Abdus Sattar Shalizi, Deputy President, Press Department, and Mr. Abdul Wahab Tarzi, President of the Tourists' Bureau, who very kindly went through the manuscript and proposed several alterations and improvements.

Last, though not least, I am grateful to my friend and colleague, Mr. Mohammad Ibrahim Sharif, who kindly co-operated in typewriting this manuscript.

*Shershahmina,  
Kabul, Afghanistan,  
1-6-1958.*

**MOHAMMED ALI**

## Introduction

No country comparable to Afghanistan in size, and no people approaching the Afghans in historical interest and importance has received so little consideration at the hands of modern writers as have Afghanistan and the Afghans. Moreover what is known about it is quite inadequate and inappropriate, for most of the books are written by those who have had their personal axes to grind. Some call it a "land of dreams", while others depict it as a forbidden land where no stranger is allowed to enter, and if perchance sets his foot on the soil "he is tempting fate". It is with a view to dispel these false notions, and to encourage friendly intercourse and better understanding that this book is offered to the public.

Afghanistan is a big country—larger than France or pre-war Germany. It has an area of over 270,000 square miles, nearly one-and-a-half times the size of Germany. The country has natural resources of great variety and in great abundance. She has mineral deposits, such as iron, coal, copper, lead, chrome, lapis-lazuli, asbestos, etc. Her potentiality for generating hydro-electric power is said to be immense. Recent reports suggest oil in different parts of the country in paying quantities. Agriculture, too, has great possibilities. With improved agricultural methods, extended irrigation, more capital, and better means of transportation and communication, Afghanistan would be able to support a population many times its present size.

It is a land of ancient traditions and ancient wisdom, the birth-place of great religious thinkers and philosophers. It has been properly called the cradle of the Aryan race, for it was here that the Aryan settlers, forefathers of the advanced nations of

today, for the first time took to a settled life and laid the foundation of a rudimentary form of democratic government. It was here that two of the great religious movements of the world—Brahminism and Zoroastrianism—took their origin. Again it was here that two of the great religious classics (the Rigveda and the Avesta) came into being.

From the archæological point of view, the country is a most remarkable storehouse of antiquities, only partly touched by the hand of modern science. The Buddhist monasteries, carved out of rocks, are still the wonder of tourists and scholars. The glory of Bamian is inexhaustible. It was a great seat of culture, similar to those well known to the Indologists in Nalanda, Ajanta, Ellora, Odandapura, etc. The remains of Balkh, the “Mother of Cities” when properly unearthed, might reveal the treasures of Greco-Bactrian culture that are still hidden in the soil of Bactria. The same may be said of the valley of Bagram in Kohistan, which has finally been identified with the spot occupied by the city of Capissa made famous by Ptolemy and the Chinese pilgrim, Huiyen Tsang, in the seventh century A.D.

Numismatic and epigraphic evidence is also very prominent in Afghanistan. The numerous varieties of ancient coins that are found here give the impression that there is no country in the world having such rich numismatic treasures. The coins that one comes across are of unusual variety—Greek, Bactrian, Thracian, Sassanian, Kushan, Hindu, ancient Afghan, Mogul, modern Afghan, etc. The inscriptions known hitherto are not very numerous, for some parts of the country are not properly excavated as yet. Naturally, most of these are in Arabic or Persian, but there are also inscriptions in Greek, Sanskrit and Pali, and even in Aramaic in the Southern Province.

Afghanistan was a great seat of Buddhism, and it was from here that this religion found its way into China, Turkestan and Mongolia. The Buddhist monasteries discovered in the various parts of the country are not only important from the archæological and historical perspectives, but also from the point of view of the history of art. The well-known school of sculpture that so wonderfully combined Greek realism with Indian mysticism, and which was named the School of Gandhara undoubtedly had its centre at Hadda, six miles south of modern Jalalabad, where its most beautiful specimens have recently been discovered. As one goes from Hadda towards Peshawar, Taxila and Lahore, the Gandhara specimens lose the striking beauty that characterises the specimens of Hadda.

Afghanistan is also a promising field of investigation for the student of comparative philology, who may hope here to come across the last of the little known and dying Indo-European languages, which are spoken in some of the mountain fastnesses of the country even to this day. Some of these ancient Aryan languages are still preserved to a considerable extent in their original form and purity by many of the isolated hill-tribes.

It is also considered to be one of the most important primary agricultural centres of the world; a whole series of different plants have originated here. Afghanistan's vegetation still awaits the investigation of the botanist, while the variety of its rocks and soils affords a vast field of research for the enthusiastic geologist.

The Afghans are a virile race of inexhaustible energy. Some look upon them as "splendid specimens of humanity and the best fighting men in Asia". They are a gifted people, brave,



intelligent, hospitable and self-reliant. They have a very strong sense of nationalism. Indeed, pride of race and love of country are instilled in an Afghan from the cradle, and nothing induces him to surrender that love of independence that seems to be the essence of his nature.

There is no caste in Afghan society ; every Afghan thinks himself as good as another. In fact, the political atmosphere of the country is healthier for the delicate plant of democracy than anywhere else in the East.

Afghanistan occupies a very important position in the strategy and politics of Central Asia. Geography has made it the great crossroad between North and South, East and West. Its location, its strategic importance, and last though not the least, its invigorating climate and the grandeur and beauty of its mountain system make it one of the most interesting places in the world to visit. Even to those who have neither hobbies nor enterprise, but want rest and recreation in a lovely country with a pleasant climate and an abundance of delicious fruits, Afghanistan would undoubtedly prove one of the best health-resorts in the world. It is among those countries, which are still totally unsophisticated and unspoiled. Here are towns and villages where one may sleep or dine in comfort, and yet be surrounded with the atmosphere of a culture as old as history itself. The jaded visitor from the parched plains of the neighbouring countries may regain health in its beautiful emerald green valleys, which, having escaped the contamination of manufacturing life, retain up to this day an ideal sylvan scenery and mediæval tranquillity.

;

Afghanistan, once the crossroads between the East and the West, after centuries of eclipse when the seas became the more

accessible and less expensive routes, has been given the opportunity once more to regain this old, prominent status with the advent of the air-age. Kandahar is located on the shortest air routes between Europe and Asia, and the air is today providing the main communication lines for the modern world. Truly never before has the old saying that history repeats itself seemed closer to dramatic confirmation.

At present, Afghanistan faces great and rapid changes. The last three decades have been a period of progress and national awakening. The State, with a view to opening new avenues of wealth, prosperity and better living to the people, is working on vast plans of educational, industrial and public welfare, and agricultural development of the country. A five-year plan for the construction of better roads, better means of communication, and the development of mines, industry, education and agriculture has been formulated. To implement and finance this vast development, the State has signed agreements with foreign countries for loans and financial assistance, intent on serving national interests, and in no way endangering national independence or security. Besides, Afghanistan has had recourse to the services of many foreign experts and construction firms, and like many other under-developed countries has been welcoming specialists and consultants who are able to help advance its modernization.

It is certain that if these vast plans and projects are honestly and successfully carried out, the day is not very far off when Afghanistan will take its proper place in the comity of advanced nations.

## Geography

**Position and Extent.**—Afghanistan, that is, “the land of the Afghans”, is an important inland country of Central Asia. It is roughly quadrilateral in shape, with a long narrow strip projecting eastward to the confines of Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan). It lies completely in the North Temperate Zone between parallels  $29^{\circ} 30'$  and  $38^{\circ} 30'$  of north latitude, and  $60^{\circ} 30'$  and  $75^{\circ}$  of east longitude. The greatest length from east to west—from the Khyber to the Zulfikar Pass (extreme northwest)—is a little more than 600 miles; while its greatest breadth from north to south—from Kham-i-Ab, on the Oxus, to the Chagai Hills, in the extreme south on the Baluchistan border—is nearly 500 miles. The total area aggregates 270,000 square miles, with a population that may roughly be estimated at 12,000,000.

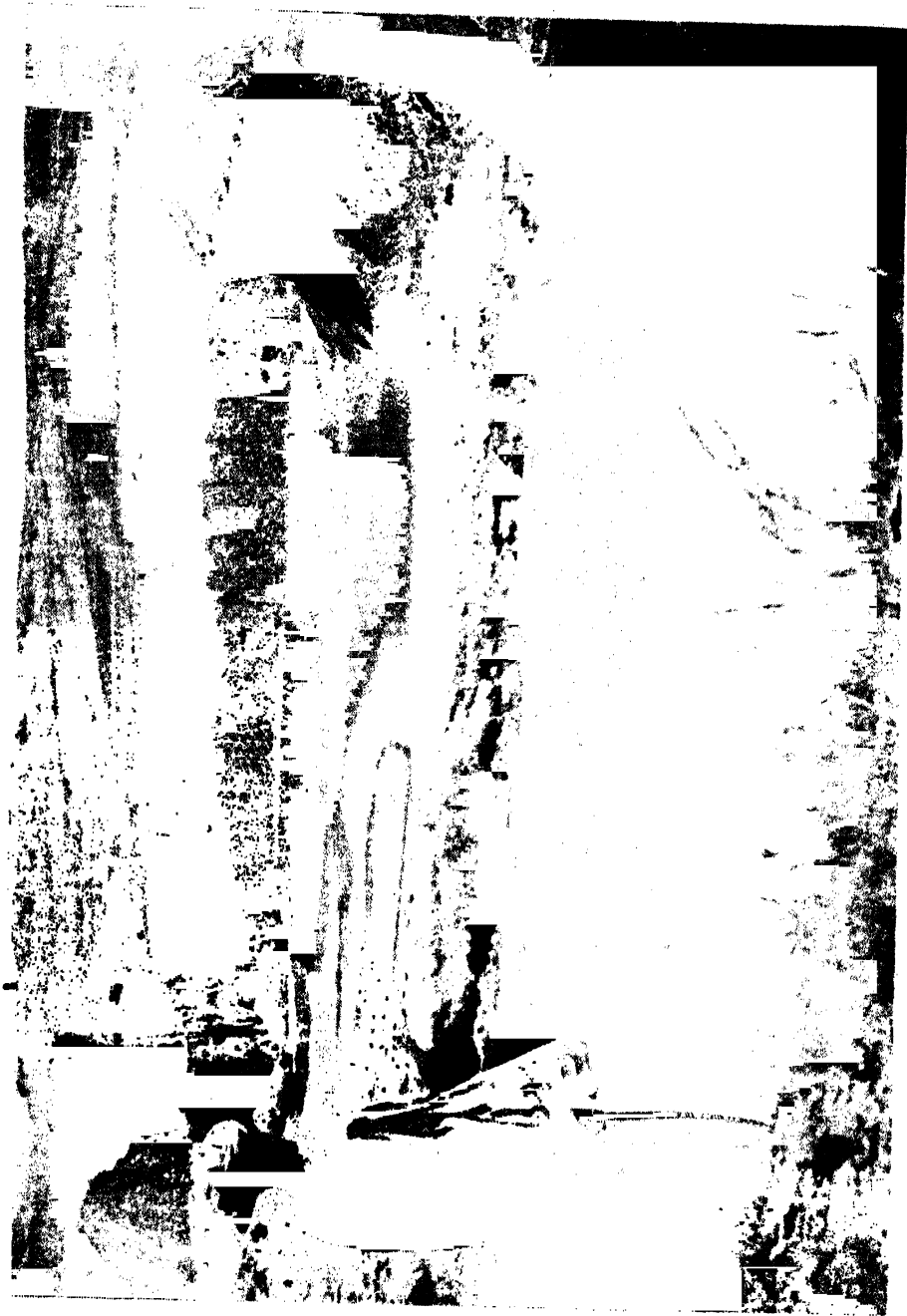
Afghanistan at present is land-locked as a result of British appropriation in 1876 of the maritime province of Baluchistan, till then a feudatory of the Amirs of Afghanistan. A little later Quetta was also occupied and turned into a military station. This policy not only cut off Afghanistan's access to the sea, which is naturally a great obstacle to progress and trade; it went still further, and in the words of Amir Abdur Rehman Khan “it pointed a dagger at the heart of the country”. Within the existing borders there are seven major provinces (Naib-ul-Hukumagi), *viz.*, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kataghan, Nangrahar and Pactia; and six minor provinces (Hukumat-i-Ala)—Maimanah, Farah, Badakhshan, Girishk, Parwan and Ghazni.

**Boundaries:** The boundaries of the country have undergone tremendous changes during the last 150 years. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Durrani Empire, built by Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747—1773 A. D.), extended from Meshad to

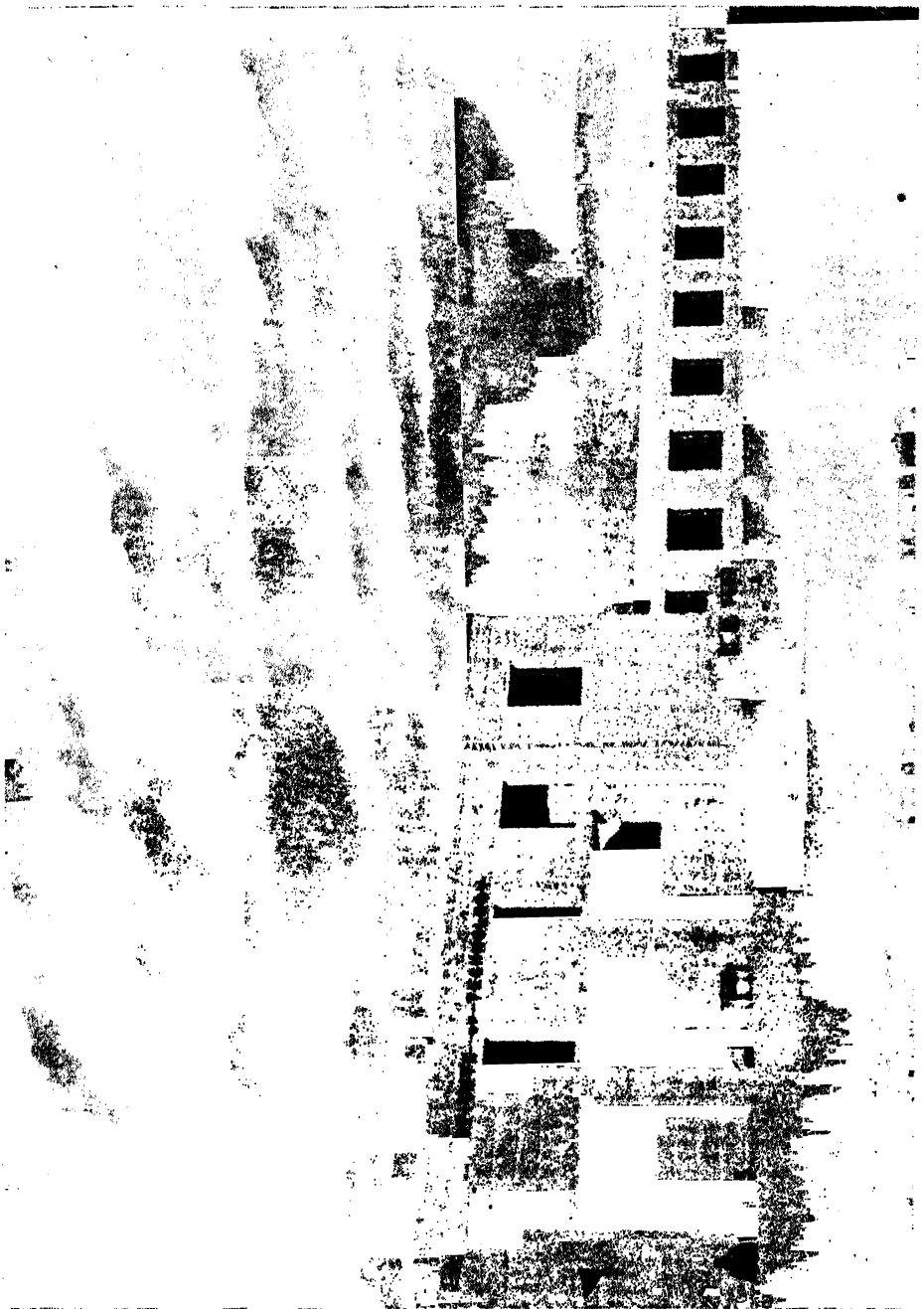
Kashmir, and from the Oxus to the Satlej and the Arabian Sea. The country suffered great diminution, first when the grandsons of Ahmad Shah Durrani contested for supremacy, and secondly when it came into conflict with the two great rival imperialistic European powers—England and Tsarist Russia. The existing boundaries, especially those in the south and east, are mostly artificial, and have been forced upon the country from time to time, irrespective of geographical, historical or ethnical considerations.

The present boundary line between Afghanistan and Russia (USSR) is over seven hundred miles long. Starting from the north-east corner of Afghanistan, where the Oxus leaves its high mountain cradle in the Pamir, it follows the course of the Oxus or Amu Derya as far as the post of Kham-i-Ab (River Bend) in the extreme north. From here the boundary leaves the Oxus and takes a south-westerly direction till it reaches the post of Tor-Ghundi opposite Kushkinski, the terminus of the Russian Trans-Caspian Railway. From this point the border line takes a north-westerly direction until it reaches the Zulfikar Pass, the trijunction point between Afghanistan, Iran and Turkmanistan. From Kham-i-Ab to Zulfikar the boundary is laid through an open and sparsely populated desert with occasional pasturage. It follows no natural features and would be undefinable but for the pillars set up by the boundary commissions.

From the Zulfikar Pass down to Siah Koh, the border line between Afghanistan and Iran remained uncertain for many years and was always the cause of friction and complaint between the two neighbouring countries. Finally in 1934, a Turkish General of repute, Fakhruddin Altaï, was appointed arbitrator by the countries concerned. His decisions were accepted by the Governments of Afghanistan and Iran.



One of the lakes of Bandi Amir, near Bamian.



The Eastern Boundary : In 1849, after the collapse of the Sikh power, the British crossed the Indus and occupied the trans-Indus Afghan districts under the name of Sikh heritage. At this time there were some prominent English statesmen who did not like to support this imperialistic policy. One of them, Sir G. Campbell, M. P., proposed to give these districts back to their "original owners." In the words of Mr. Campbell : "My proposal in 1849 was to give these extra-Indian districts back to the Afghans, establishing our scientific military frontier upon the Upper Indus. But that great man (Lord Dalhousie) had a weakness ; it was perhaps in a disposition to carry annexation too far, and I venture to think him wrong when he overstepped the natural and ethnographical boundaries of India in going beyond the Indus on one side and into Burma on the other."

Later on (November 12, 1893) a new line of demarcation, the so-called Durand Line, was forced upon Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. The British according to this new pact excluded from the Kabul political jurisdiction "a million Pathans\* of military age—the cream of the fighting strength of the country." This line, which excludes over a third of the Afghan people from their national government, has been the basic cause of all frontier troubles since the beginning of the 19th century until this day.

## PHYSICAL FEATURES

Afghanistan is a highland, its average height being three to four thousand feet above sea-level. The general character of the country is mountainous. It is largely covered by a series of ranges running in all directions, but generally from north-east to south-west. The north-eastern and central portions of the country form

\*There is no real distinction between the Afghan, Pathan or Pashtun. The Afghans, while speaking Pashto, call themselves Pashtuns. The word Pathan is the corrupted form of Pashtun and is used mostly in India.

a great plateau with an average height of some six thousand feet, with the Hindu Kush as its backbone. On all sides this plateau descends abruptly to lowland, save in the north-east, where it rises to the lofty Pamirs. To the south of the country lies the arid land called Seistan and Garmser, the average height here being 1,600 feet. Towards the north of the Hindu Kush it slopes away into another depressed tract as far as the Amu (the Oxus)—a vast plain of loess. Eastwards there is a sudden drop into the Indus basin.

The central mountain range, or more properly ranges, dwindle away into the steppes and Namaksars (salt-deserts), lying north of Herat, where they meet the line of the Elburz coming from the opposite direction. The highest part of this plateau is the Pamir, more familiarly known as “Bam-i-Dunya” (the Roof of the World). It is a vast plateau with a series of narrow valleys, having steeply sloping sides, the average height being ten to twelve thousand feet, while many of its intervening peaks run up to 18,000 feet and over. Here the characteristic types of landscape are “tent-shaped, glacier coated mountains, divided by broad easy gaps, heights bare of verdure and shorn of forests and a land of desolate lakes—a region where for the greater part of the year there is neither fuel nor fodder, an Engadine of Asia, with nine months “winter and three months cold weather; the home of wild sheep and shaggy yak, and the summer haunt of a few wandering shepherds.”

Physically the country may easily be divided into eight distinct regions:

(1) The Broad Lowland of Ancient Bactria:—This lies to the north between the Oxus and the massive mountain system of Tirband-i-Turkestan and the Hindu Kush. The rivers that rise in these mountains and flow to the north almost



all lose themselves in the sands before reaching the Oxus. In ancient and mediæval ages Bactria had a fine system of irrigation, and was one of the richest parts of Central Asia. The Mongol depredations of the thirteenth century and later on Tamerlane's incursions wiped out all these irrigation works, and since then it has not fully regained its past fertility, and is therefore very sparsely populated.

(2) The Hindu Kush Region: This constitutes a mountainous mass, difficult of access, mostly barren and uninhabited. This massive range, which takes its source from the Pamirs, melts away in fingers that spread fanwise north, south and west over the face of the country as far as the Shibar and Bamian passes. The average height is over 15,000 feet, and the peaks, which are covered with eternal snow, rise to 18,000 feet and over. The stupendous heights of these mountains, the magnificence of their lofty summits, the solemn and undisturbed solitude that reigns amidst these eternal snows, fill the mind with awe and admiration.

(3) The Hilly Region of Badakhshan: This lies to the north-east, on the left bank of the Oxus. Here the mountains are generally covered with forests, and the intervening valleys are mostly fertile and well-watered.

(4) Kabulistan: This is the most convenient term for the series of high alluvial plains which, lying between 5,000 and 6,000 feet above sea-level, occupy the region round Kabul. These plains are well-watered by the Kabul and its numerous tributaries. They constitute the richest and most densely settled part of Afghanistan, with a bracing climate except where there are marshes.

(5) The Central Block of Hazarajat: This is a vast tableland extending from Herat to Kabul and from Ghazni to Bamian. It is a high, bleak, and intensely inhospitable country, where snow lies for the greater part of the year, and where little or no fruit

is grown, and the cultivation is confined to the narrow banks of the rivers and streams. This irregular tableland has been scored and eroded by centuries of river action. From here emerge some of the greatest rivers of Afghanistan. To the north the river Khulm (Tashqurghan) and the Balkh take a hurried start for the plains of Bactria; westward the Hari Rud streams off to Herat; southward extend the long curving lines of the Helmand, Harut, Khash Rud and Arghandab. and eastward flows the Kabul with its various branches. A rugged mountain mass, called the Koh-i-Baba and Firoz Koh, the lineal continuation of the Hindu Kush, dominates this rolling plateau from the North. Taken as a whole these Hazara uplands may be described as one would describe Tibet—a rolling, heaving, desolate tableland, wrinkled and intersected by narrow mountain ranges, whose peaks run from 13,000 to 14,000 feet in altitude, enclosing between them restricted spaces and pasture-land.

(6) The Arachosian Plain. This lies to the southwest. Here are the fertile districts of Kandahar and Zamindawar, watered by the Arghandab and the Helmand respectively. But the southwestern corner of this region constitutes a vast sandy tract, called Seistan. It is a flat, unwholesome country extending on either side of the Helmand. It owes its place in history and its reputation of enormous productiveness to the fact that it is the great central basin of Afghanistan, where the Helmand and nearly half-a-dozen other Afghan rivers run to a finish in vast swamps and lagoons. Surrounded by vast deserts on all sides, Seistan itself is seldom waterless, and there was, in days that can hardly be called ancient, a really fine system of irrigation, which fertilized a large tract of now unproductive land. The soil of Seistan is alluvial and consists chiefly of sand mixed with clay. A part of the surface shows moving sands. The land is generally flat, but there are a few low sandy hills.

(7) **The Valley of Hari Rud:** This occupies the north-western corner of the country and extends lengthwise to the border of Iran. It is extremely fertile and well-watered, and is known to history by the name of "the Granary of Central Asia."

(8) **The Lowland of Jalalabad (or the Ancient Plain of Nangrahar):** This lies to the east, between the Hindu Kush and the Speen Ghar Range, and comprises the fertile districts of Laghman, Besud, Jalalabad, Kama and Surkh Rud. The average height is 2,000 feet. Its black soil is very productive, but its climate, though very pleasant in winter, is hot and heavy disagreeable in summer.

### **Mountains**

Afghanistan has rightly been called the land of mountains. From the air they seem to be without number; range after range extend to the horizon, so that the land resembles a sea in a heavy gale.

The most important of the mountain systems of the country, being a continuation of the lofty Himalayas, is the Hindu Kush. It commences from the north-eastern corner of the Wakhan district, and taking a south-westerly turn, goes through the heart of the country. After traversing a distance of some 600 miles, it ultimately dwindles away in the steppes and Namak-sars of Herat. This gigantic range divides the country into two parts: the northern includes the provinces of Kataghan, Badakhshan, Mazar-i-Sharif and Maimanah; while the southern comprises the districts of Jalalabad, Kabul, Ghazni and Kandahar. This main range, the backbone of the country, which extends from the Pamir to the north of Herat, is known by different names in different parts of the country. The eastern portion

from the Pamir to the Bamian Pass, is called the Hindu Kush Proper, which is again divided into two parts, *viz.*, the Oriental and the Occidental.

**The Oriental Hindu Kush:**—Starting from Wakhan it terminates at the Khawak Pass. The extreme north-east portion of this branch, at its junction with the Pamir, forms the boundary between three systems of drainage—those of the Indus, the Amu and the Tarim while further west it forms the watershed between the Amu and the Indus valleys. This part of the Hindu Kush rivals the Himalayas in the height of its peaks and the extent of its glaciers. It culminates in the beautiful peak of Tirich Mir (25,426 feet), located in the north of Chitral.

The Oriental Hindu Kush, though a great obstacle, is no effective barrier in a military or commercial sense, for it is notched by a series of high passes, some of which are traversable for the greater part of the year. From Hunza, a district to the north of Chitral the passes of Kilik (15,600 ft.), Wakhjir (16,150 ft.), and Mingatake (15,430 ft.) lead to the Little Pamir and Yarkand; while from Chitral, the Broghil (12,460 ft.) and Kachin (18,500 ft.) lead into Wakhan. Other passes between Chitral and Afghanistan are: Sar Ishtrag (17,450 ft.), Agram (16,630 ft.), Afsik (12,300 ft.), Durah (14,800 ft.) and Mandal (15,300 ft.), the last provides communication between Nuristan and the Kokchah Valley.

A southern off-shoot of this range penetrates into the rugged but beautiful country of Nuristan—an inaccessible and difficult tract of dense mountainous forests, known by the general name of the Asmar Forests.

**The Occidental Hindu Kush.**—Beginning from the Khawak it terminates at the Dandan Shikkan Pass (8,830 ft.)

This range is comparatively shorter and broader, maximum breadth being 60 miles and the average height 14,000 feet. The principal peaks from east to west are: Sheptal (15,000 ft.) Quilian (16,900 ft.), and Kharzar (15,000 ft.) This range, too, is intersected by a series of narrow but difficult passes, which from time immemorial, have been used by invaders and travelers, and were also the chief trade routes between India and Central Asian countries. It was through these passes that the hordes of invaders, such as the Aryans, the Greeks, the Khushans, the Mongols, Tartars and others poured down on the fertile plains of India.

The best known passes of this range are: the Khawak (11,640 ft.), Khoknoll (11,450 ft.), Til (11,640 ft.), Salang and Bajgah (12,300 ft.), Kaoshan (14,340 ft.), Chahardar (11,300 ft.) Bamian (8,830 ft.), Akrobat, (10,255 ft.) Pelu (10,255 ft.) and Dandan Shikan (8,830 ft.). It was through the Bamian Pass that the famous Chinese pilgrim, Huien Tsang, passed on his way to India in the early part of the 7th century A.D. He was very much impressed by the gigantic figures of Buddha on the face of the cliff, where they are still to be seen, though slightly disfigured.

This range throughout is barren of everything except some tiny bushes of pistachio and silphium (or asafoetida), that are mostly found on its northern slopes.

Mr. Douglas in his famous book, "Beyond the High Himalayas," writes in this connection. "The weird formations which the middle stretch of the Hindu Kush show are secondary to the colors of the rocks. I have seen nothing more beautiful than what the Hindu Kush discloses. These rocks are filled with yellow, red, green, pink, and purple. The air is so clear, the sun so brilliant, that every color, every shade is emphasized.

Every sunset turns peaks from gray to pink, to gold, to mauve. Every sunrise turns the Hindu Kush into mountains of magic."

**The Koh-i-Baba.**—Commencing from Bamian it extends westwards for a distance of about 125 miles. Its average height is less than 13,000 feet. Its culminating peak, Shah-i-Foladi or Shakh-i-Foladi, (16,874 feet) overlooks the sources of the principal rivers of the country, such as the Hari Rud, the Kabul and the Helmand. Another beautiful peak in this range is the Koh-i-Arus (the Mountain of the Bride), which, with its rose-coloured conical summit and dazzling cap of snow, attracts the attention from a great distance.

The Koh-i-Baba, like the Oriental Hindu Kush, is mostly rugged, desolate and devoid of verdure.

**The Firoz Koh.**—Further west of Koh-i-Baba is a double range, called Firoz Koh. It runs roughly parallel to the Tirband-i-Turkestan, another range lying to the north. The northern branch of the Firoz Koh is called the Safid Koh (the White Mountain), not to be confused with the Speen Ghar (Mont Blanc) of the Nangrahar Province. The southern range is known by the general name of Siah Koh (the Black Mountain). This too is rugged, mostly barren and pathless, and follows a course nearly parallel to the last named mountain. The southern spurs of this range give rise to the Khash Rud and some minor feeders of the Helmand.

**The Parapomiusus.**—This is a small range lying to the extreme west, between the districts of Herat and Badghisat. Its local name is Siah Babuk. It is comparatively low and is nowhere more than 9,000 feet high. From the city of Herat to the crest of the Parapomiusus, which is pierced by several easy passes, such as Ardewan, Sabz, Sang, Hazrat Baba, and



The Buzkashi Match at Shahmahmud Stadium, Kabul.



A narrow white



Zarmast, is a distance of 16 to 25 miles. The total fall from these passes to Herat is about 2,000 feet. Between this range and the city there is a low ridge called the Koh-i-Mulla Khawaja, which dominates the city from a distance of about three miles, only with a higher altitude of 600 to 800 feet.

**The Speen Ghar (Mont Blanc).**—This is an off-shoot of the great Sulaiman Range. It overlooks the Afridi Tirah on one side and the valley of Nangrahar (modern Jalalabad) on the other. Sikkaram, its highest peak, is 15,600 feet in height, and as it is covered with perpetual snow, the whole range being termed Speen Ghar, *i.e.*, the White Mountain. A high ridge of this range penetrates the Jaji country, whence it stretches as far as Jadran and Mangal territory (Pactia Province). The slope of this range on both sides, as well as of those ranges that penetrate the Southern Province (Pactia), are all covered with dense coniferous forests. There are pine trees and grand deodars (cedars), and magnificent ilex (oak) trees, which throw broad square spaces of solid shade.

From here westward stretches a boundless vista of ridges and hazy plains, fainting to almost imperceptible tints of blue, till it is only against the yellowing evening sky that the pale silhouette of the hills that stand about Ghazni can be detected. Here lie the famous passes of Gomal, Tochi, Shuttargardan and Peiwar (or Tootgai). The first two figure in mediæval history and were selected early in the eleventh century, by the great Sultan of Ghazni, Mahmud, who is said to have swept down through these passes with his cavalry and with a rapidity that seems incredible for those days.

**The Sulaiman Range.**—This mountain system serves as a barrier between the Indus basin and the highlands of modern Afghanistan. The Sulaiman Hills are mostly rugged, barren

and unprofitable. •The mightiest of the Sulaiman Mountains is the one which is called Takht-i-Sulaiman (Soloman's Throne). It may be seen on the western horizon from Dera Ismail Khan against the evening sky—a grey, flat-looking rampart rising from the lower line of mountains north and south of it, slightly depressed or saddle-backed in the middle, but culminating in a well-defined peak at its northern extremity. Such is the appearance of the Takht (the peak) from afar. It is difficult to approach it for reason of the steepness of the cliffs and the scarps which surround it.

**Central Afghanistan (or Hazarajat)** is to a very large extent a land of difficult hills and deep and rugged defiles. These numerous subsidiary ranges run mostly parallel to each other, and some of them extend as far as Kandahar. One exceptionally long spur forms the steep Khojak Range, which has been pierced to allow a branch of the N.W. Railway to reach the Afghan frontier at New Chaman.

**The Tirband-i-Turkestan.**—This most important range lies south of Maimanah. It is about 120 miles long, and runs roughly parallel to the Firoz Koh. Its highest peak, Zangolak, reaches a height of 11,590 feet.

**Passes Leading to the Indus Basin.**—The mountain ranges forming the eastern boundary of modern Afghanistan are pierced at many places by passes across which invading hordes have poured in all ages to take possession of the fertile valleys below. They have also been the chief commercial links between the sub-continent of pre-partitioned India and Afghanistan from time immemorial. Most of these passes have been formed by the valleys of the rivers flowing towards the Indus, and are generally named after these tributaries. The most famous among these,

which has been frequently trodden and which is even now the most important trade route of the country, is the Khyber, from the name of the last defile through which the Kabul-Peshawar route passes. It goes along the Khyber Pass (3,370 ft.) to Jalalabad (4,950 ft.) and thence *via* Lataband Pass (8,000 ft.) or Tang-i-Gharu Gorge to Kabul (6,000 ft.), the capital of Afghanistan. The distance between Kabul and Peshawar is 180 miles.

The second route leads *via* Peiwar Kotal to the Kurram valley, joining the Jaji country with Parachinar and Thal. In the Second Afghan War (1878—80) this route was most frequently used by the British invading troops. It is not motorable. The distance between Kabul and Parachinar *via* Peiwar and Shuttargardan Passes is about 100 miles.

The third is the Tochi Pass, linking Ghazni with the Indus basin. It too, is, not motorable. It was frequently used by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (998—1030 A.D.) during his Indian invasions.

The fourth is the Gomal Pass. This route is also very important historically. The Gomal and Tochi have been used for hundreds of years by the great clans of warrior-merchants, the Ghilzais, Powindahs, and Kharotis who move their caravans down these passes each year to pass their winter in the warm plains below. They generally leave their women-folk, children and old men somewhere near the border, while the young men take their camels and merchandise to trade in the Punjab and Central India. Their wares consist mostly of carpets, felt-rugs, dried fruits, wool and lamb skins. On their return journey to Afghanistan, they take up textiles, tea, sugar and hardware.

This route starts from Dera Ismail Khan and goes along the Gomal Pass (7,500 ft.) to Ghazni (7,280 ft.) in Eastern

Afghanistan. A branch of it leads to Kilat-i-Ghilzai and Katawaz. Trade is carried over it on camels, horses and ponies.

The fifth is the Bolan Pass route, which starts from Quetta (5,000 ft.) and goes along the Khojak Pass and *via* Chaman (4,450 ft.) reaches Kandahar (3,340 ft.) in Southern Afghanistan. From Kandahar it passes farther into the interior of the country and goes to Herat *via* Farah in Western Afghanistan. From Chaman to Kandahar there is now an excellent motor road 70 miles long, which carries a considerable part of the trade of the country.

There are also some minor routes from Jalalabad to Bajaur and Swat *via* the Kunar valley. Alexander, the Great, during his march on India (327 B.C.) made use of one of these routes.

### **Rivers & Lakes.**

Afghanistan, though well-watered, has few large rivers for a country of such a size. With the exception of the Amu (the Oxus), in the extreme north, which forms the natural boundary between Russian Turkestan and Afghanistan, there is no river in the whole of the country which is not fordable throughout its course for the greater part of the year.

Afghanistan is a closed basin, having no outlet to the open sea. Its maritime province, Baluchistan, was snatched from it in 1876, and incorporated with British India. Except the Kabul and its tributaries and a few small rivers in the south-east, which flow into the Indus, all the rivers of Afghanistan are either absorbed inland or disappear in the neighbouring countries. Though most of these rivers are not suitable for navigation they offer great potentialities for the development of combined irrigation and hydro-electric projects. But the greatest drawback in this

respect is that these rivers have a seasonal flow, being fed during the rainy season, which does not last for more than four months, and for the rest of the year they are practically without any appreciable flow. The full utilization of the waters of these rivers is, therefore, possible only by the construction of dams and large storage reservoirs at suitable points, which in a hilly country like Afghanistan, are not lacking. The flow of the stored water, as it is let out for purposes of irrigation, can also be utilized for generating electric energy.

The rivers of Afghanistan can easily be divided into three categories: (1) Those that flow to the north, most of them ultimately disappearing in oases from which there is no outlet; (2) those that run to the east and empty themselves into the Indus; (3) those that run to a finish in the swamps and Hamuns of Helmand.

(1) The rivers of the Oxus basin :

**The Oxus.**—Its old and classical names are: Wehroth, Kui Shu, Wurhu, and Jaihun. The modern name of Amu is derived from the town of Amul, later Amu and Amuyah.

The Amu is the largest river of Central Asia, being 1,400 miles long, and serves as a natural boundary between Afghanistan and Russian Turkestan for some 400 miles. Rising in the plateau of the Little Pamir, which in winter is a world of snow and ice, the Amu flows west through the depression of Central Asia, and after leaving the Afghan border at Kham-i-Ab, turns north-west and traverses a vast desert. It ultimately falls into the Sea of Aral.

In its upper course the Amu is generally known by the name of Punja or Five Rivers. Contributing to the volume of its upper waters are two principal streams—the Pamir and the Aksu.

The trio drain the Pamirs, the Aksu uniting with Panjah at Kala-i-Wamar, the third at Langer Kisht. The Pamir and the Aksu rise amid the glaciers which drain into the Sarikul Lake (13,390 ft, above sea-level) and Lake Chakmaktin (13,100 ft). The five rivers which make up the waters of the Panjah or upper Oxus are ; the Pamir, the Panjah, the Aksu (or Murghab), the Shakh and the Ghund.

The Oxus is very rapid in its early course. At Baza-i-Gumbaz and for a short distance along the Wakhan valley, the river slackens, until turning westward it recovers its speed and tumbles swiftly forward. From Rang, which is a little east of Ishkashim, to Khorok in Shighnan, there is a preceptible increase in the current of the river.

The Oxus, in its passage through the Wakhan valley, presents a number of interesting contrasts. In its higher reaches, at first a tumbling mountain torrent, it becomes, below Langar-Kisht, a slow lifeless stream, so nerveless and placid that it cannot carry with it the stones which it has brought from its upper course. The eye meets here vast areas covered with large quantities of debris. But a little below, as far as Ptuk, there is a belt of vegetation, and the banks are covered with grass. There are many willows, white poplars, and here and there impenetrable copses of camel thorns. Beyond Ptuk once more the beneficent character of the river changes, and the banks reflect a waste of sand-dunes and patches of drift sand. Even the mud deposit of the main stream appears to be exhausted. The mountains at Langer Kisht recede considerably on either side from the river and thus make room for a broader valley. But they close again immediately west of Kala-i-Panjah, forming a very narrow ravine through which the river can just pass. Beyond this narrow passage the valley expands once more and the river is divided into a

number of arms, dotted with little islands, all covered with stunted thorny bushes.

Between Sersai and Nut, the stream forces its way through such a narrow rocky ravine that the boom of the falling waters echoes throughout the valleys. Below Nut the valley widens, and the banks of the river are covered with thick copses—the haunt of wild animals and the home of many beautiful birds.

After making a semicircle round Badakhshan, the Amu enters the ancient plain of Bactria, so famous in history. Here it receives the waters of the Kokcha and the Kunduz (now Baghlan), which rise from the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush. The period of the greatest activity of these rivers begins in May, when the ice melts and the heavy snow breaks up. At such a moment a large volume of water sweeps their shallow channels, carrying with it huge masses of stones and ice, running with such a force as to make fording extremely difficult and dangerous. The main channel is so swollen that the great quantity of water passing through its bed breaks its bounds and totally inundates the adjoining valleys.

From Hazrat-i-Imam onwards, the river flows in open country, and is no longer confined by the walls of mountains. Numerous feeders appear on either bank at this point of its course. The Kulab, Surkhab, and Durban appear on the right, while on the other side Kataghan and Mazar give rise to a large number of streams, but nearly all of them are exhausted (specially those of Mazar) before they have an opportunity to effect a junction with the Oxus.

The Oxus is peculiarly liable to shift its channel, and has done so from time to time, forming new islands, taking fresh curves, and actually changing its destination from the Caspian

Sea to the Aral. In its lower reaches the bed of the river is extremely muddy, and it has been estimated that no less than 16,000,000 tons of sedimentary matter constantly pass down the channel to form a vast delta at its mouth.

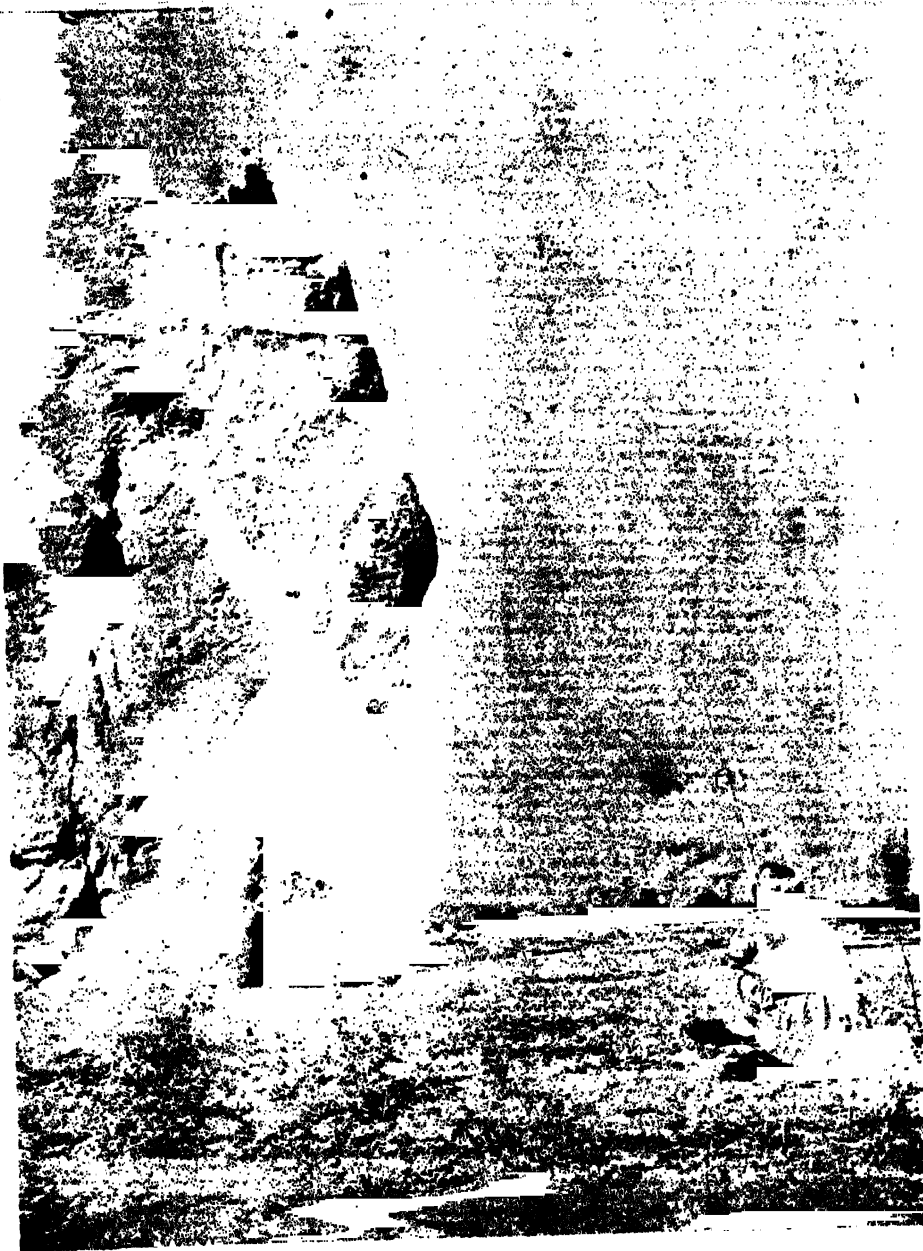
**The Kokcha.**—This is a small turbulent tributary of the Amu and takes its source near Ramgul Pass, at the northern foot of the Hindu Kush. Taking a northerly direction, it flows past the villages of Anjuman, Skarkar, Parwara, Ishpishmir, Garm, Iskan, Jurm, Khairabad, and reaches Faizabad, the capital city of Badakhshan. Then turning north-west it passes below Rustaq, and making for the Oxus, flows into it to the north of Hazrat-i-Imam. Little use is made of the waters of this river, for its bed is very deep and the current is extremely swift.

**The Kunduz.**—Another river of this category is the Kunduz, now called Baghlan. Rising in the western Hindu Kush, near Bamian, it flows through the Shikari Pass, where it is known by the name of Bamian Stream (Rud-i-Bamian). At Doab it receives the waters of the Shighnan and Kamard. The joint stream then breaks out of the Hindu Kush gorge near Barfak, and makes for Doshi. After passing through a series of difficult narrow valleys, and through steep and rocky banks, it reaches Pul-i-Khumri, a comparatively open country. Leaving Baghlan to the west it flows straight to the north and, *via* Aliabad, goes to Kunduz, whence, turning north-east, it flows into the Oxus.

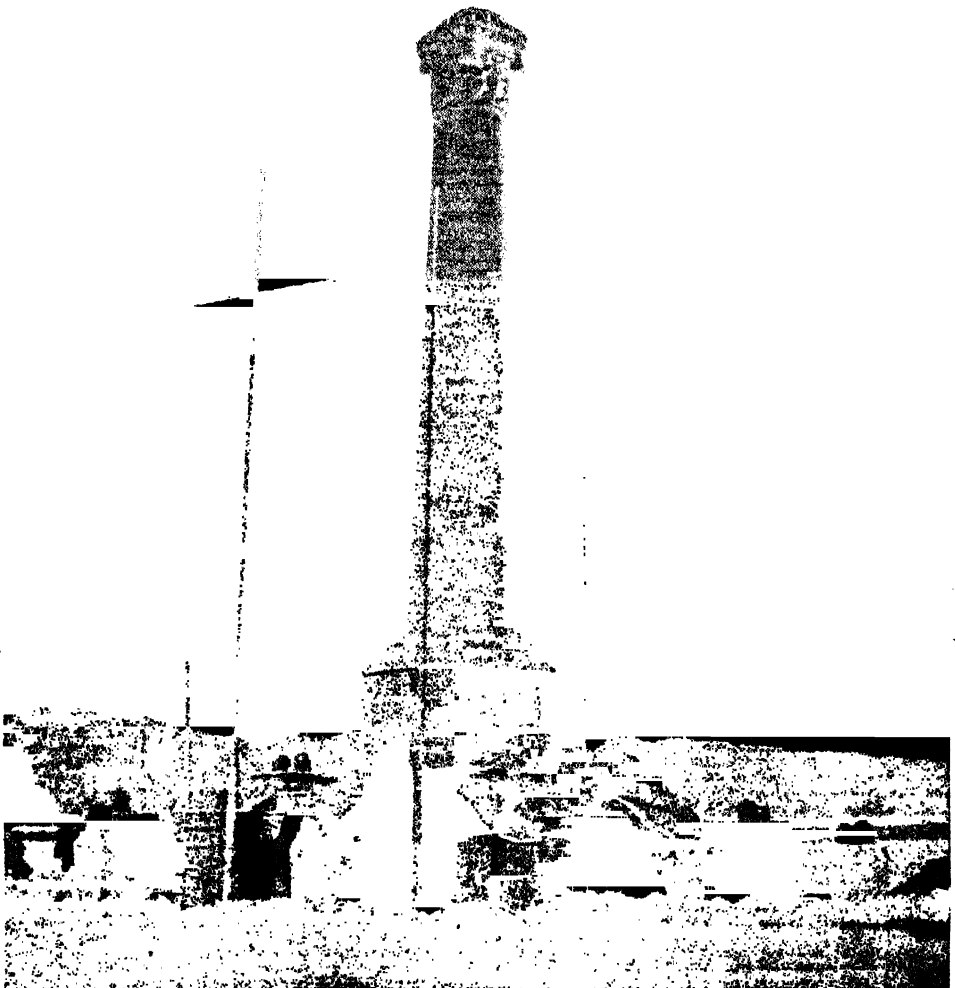
The Kunduz, throughout its length, in the plains as well as in the hilly districts, is utilized for irrigation purposes, so very little is left of it when it makes a junction with the Amu.

Other tributaries of the Oxus, which take their rise on the northern slopes of the Hindu Kush, are : the Tashqurghan, the





The remains of an old Watch tower.



**The Independence Memorial, Kabul.**

Balkh and the Maimanah. But they often lose themselves on their way and seldom reach the Oxus.

**The Murghab (385 miles).** - This is an important river of this group, and takes its rise in the mass of mountains connecting the eastern extremities of the Firoz Koh and the Tirband-i-Turkestan. At first it flows in a westerly direction, but after receiving the waters of numerous tributaries, it turns north-west and passes the Afghan fortress of Bala Murghab and the border post of Karawalkhana. At the latter place it receives the waters of the Kansar, one of its affluents. Continuing in a north-westerly direction it flows past Maruchak, lying on the right bank, where a short distance below, the Kashan flows into it. At Maruchak the river is the dividing point between Russia and Afghanistan for a distance of some 15 miles. The villages of Panjdeh and Akteppe are both situated upon the left bank of the river, within the Russian territory. At Akteppe it receives the waters of the Kushk river, which rises from the northern slopes of the Parapomismus range. From this point onward the Murghab flows in a due northerly direction, till it runs dry in the sands of the Karakum desert.

The country through which the river flows is, in the main, a mixture of desert wastes and cultivated strips, with rising uplands, carpeted in spring by bright flowers and hidden in winter by heavy snows. South-west of Bala Murghab the valley narrows to a defile. Through this the river rolls, tumbling with thunderous clamour towards Panjdeh, where it acquires a considerable breadth. The swiftness of its current and the uncertainty of its depth, together with deep holes and masses of protruding rocks, add to the hidden dangers from quicksands, and make fording intricate proceeding. Rafts and inflated skins are generally employed by the local people while crossing this river.

**The Hari Rud (530 miles).** This is the last river of this group, and takes its source from the Dai Zangi mountains, west of Koh-i-Baba, at a height of 10,050 feet. It is chiefly formed by the combination of two streams, Sar-i-Jangal and Tangalab, which meet a little below the village of Daulatyar (8,117 ft.). For a distance of about 300 miles the Hari Rud flows from east to west, mostly through the fertile valley and charming scenery of the province of Herat, roughly parallel to the Parapomius range. Then flowing south of the city, it makes for Zindajan. Here 30 miles west of Herat, it changes its direction and turns north-west, passes Kushan, and finally touches the Iranian border at Toman Agha, whence, for a distance of some 60 miles, it forms the natural boundary between Afghanistan and Iran. It leaves the Afghan border at the Zulfikar Pass, and after irrigating the Tejend Oases, it gradually dwindles away, until it ultimately loses itself in the sands. The province of Herat, the "Granary of Central Asia", owes its importance, undoubtedly, to this river, and it may be appropriately called the "Gift of the Hari Rud."

(2). Rivers which take their waters to the Indus: The greatest river of this category is the Kabul, which is quite an insignificant stream in its early course. It rises at a height of 14,079 feet under the Unai Pass, on the western slopes of an extension of the Paghman range, which separates it from the sources of the Helmand. This river in the irrigation season runs dry in its upper course as all the water is diverted from it into the fields that border it.

**The Kabul** after issuing from the Unai Pass, first takes an easterly direction, and passes through the villages of Taghri, Jalrez, the Mamakai. Then suddenly changing its course, it flows south-west and waters Maidan, a fertile valley 25 miles west of

Kabul. After flowing through a narrow gorge, Lalandar by name, it makes a circuit round the Korough mountain, south of Kabul, and enters the beautiful valley of Chardeh. Here it receives the waters of the Paghman river. The joint stream, under the name of Rud-i-Kabul, passes through the Guzargah Pass, and flows through the heart of the old city. The Lohgar, after irrigating the famous Lohgar valley, joins it a little below the city. It is really a bigger stream than the Kabul and plays an important part in the agricultural development of a very large district south of the capital, a district which rivals any in Afghanistan for beauty of natural scenery and richness of cultivation.

The Kabul, after irrigating the vast plains east of the capital, enters another gorge, the Tang-i-Gharu. A few miles below, it makes a fall, known as Mahipar. It then enters the Sarobi plain, where it receives the waters of the Panjsher, the Shuttal, the Ghorband, the Tagab and the Mahipar. The joint stream then makes for the Laghman valley through a third gorge—Tangi Abrishimi (the Silken Gorge)—which is 18 miles long and is encompassed by high rugged hills. It then moves along the fertile valley of Laghman (old names : Lampaka and Lamqan). Here two more tributaries, Alishang and Alinghar, flow into it. Below Daronta, where the Kabul is crossed by a suspension bridge, the Surkh Rud joins it from the south-west. Here the Kabul becomes a river of considerable size, and fording is not possible. A few miles below Jalalabad, near Kama, the Kunar, coming from the north, joins it. The river Kabul then flows eastward, roughly parallel to the Kabul-Peshawar road. After crossing Dakka, Afghan frontier post, it forces its way through a fourth gorge in the independent Mohmand territory. This portion of the river contains several whirlpools, which render

navigation a matter of difficulty and danger to all who are not familiar with its currents. The whirlpools are said to be situated mostly in the narrow gorges of the Khyber mountains, and it is here where the skill of the raftsmen is called into play to prevent sudden disaster, for the swiftness of the current gives little opportunity for correcting a mistake in steering. After crossing this dangerous gorge, the Kabul enters the fertile district of Peshawar near Michni. Here it receives a few more tributaries from the north, such as Panjkora, Swat, etc. After irrigating the rich alluvial plain of Peshawar and Nowshera, the Kabul ultimately falls into the Indus, near Attock.

**The Kunar.**—This is by far the most important tributary of the Kabul river. In its northern course it goes by the names of the Yarkhun, the Mastuj, or the Chitral, and after crossing Asmar into the Afghan territory it comes to be known as the Kunar, from the valley through which it passes.

The Kunar rises in a blue lake called Gazkul or Karumbar, under the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush. This at least is one of its sources. Here it is known as the Yarkhun river. Many a mighty glacier offers its contribution to this river. The Yarkhun then flows past the foot of the Broghil Pass over pebbles and boulder-covered flats, and through enormous gorges, with here and there the snout of a glacier protruding, or even temporarily blocking the valley, till it reaches Mastuj. From this point onward they call it the Chitral river or Kashkar, for it now flows past Chitral and through the district known to the hill-people as Kashkar, which occupies the last 50 miles of its course before it joins the Kabul.

During its early course the Kunar receives the drainage of numerous valleys on either side, and is spanned by many suspension bridges, made mostly of ropes. Even when the river is

moderately placid and shallow, the fords are always bad because of the boulders and stones in the bed.

The Kunar valley of Bashgul, or Arnawai, together lead up to the Mandal and Dorah Passes, either of which is the gateway to the rich valleys of Eastern Afghanistan, and opens a direct line to Jalalabad from the Oxus, which does not touch Kabul at all. These passes are high, difficult, and very much more deeply buried under snow than those further west. The Broghil Pass, which leads out of the Yarkhun valley into Wakhan, is practicable for laden animals during eight months of the year. The Dorah Pass is also much trodden, and is also used by pack animals as a commercial link between the Kunar valley and Badakhshan, but it is open for traffic for three months only—from July to September.

Other important rivers of this category are : the Kurram, the Tochi, the Gomai, the Kundil and the Sharan Toi, all flowing east to join the Aba-sin, or the Indus.

(3) Rivers that empty their waters into the Seistan Lakes: The most important river of this group is the Helmand, which drains the south-western part of the country. The name also takes the forms of Heirmand and Hilman ; ancient names are : Etymander, Etyman-doros, Erymanthus and Hætumat.

**The Helmand** is the largest of the inland rivers, being 625 miles in length. It rises in an elevated valley on the western side of the Paghman range, an offshoot of the great Hindu Kush. In its preliminary course, for a distance of nearly 200 miles, it flows in a westerly direction through the heart of Hazara country. Then it breaks out of the mountains and drains the open country and cultivated plains of Zamindawar. Below Girishk it receives the joint stream—the Arghandab-Tranak-Arghastan—which drains south-western Afghanistan. The Helmand then enters a desert

which extends throughout its lower course till it terminates in the lakes of Seistan. There the Helmand divides itself into many channels, forming, as it were, an inland delta, from which the waters are evaporated by the hot air, for there is no opening to the sea.

The immediate banks of the river and the country within half a mile are nearly everywhere, with the exception of the great desert, fertile and in most places well-cultivated. Though fordable for the most of the year in the greater part of its length, the Helmand is still a formidable river. Even in the dry season it is breast-deep at the fords, but at the time of snow-melting, that is, early spring, it is very rapid, and fording is a dangerous task. Inflated skins and toteens (a kind of raft) are used in crossing this river at its mouth.

The Helmand has frequently changed its course within historic times. Silting up its bed, it has always struck out new channels for itself. It has altered the face of the land so extensively and so often that it is rather difficult to prove the vast extent of its ancient agricultural wealth and the immensity of its population. Besides this, other forces of nature, which seem to be let loose on Seistan with peculiar violence and activity, have also been at work to change its topography. The sweeping blasts of the north-west wind, which rage through this part of Asia with a strength and persistence unknown in regions more protected by topographical features, are forming vast, smooth slopes to the windward side of every obstruction by smoothing off the rough angles of the gaunt bones of former buildings, and sometimes positively wearing them away by the force of attrition. Villages that flourish one year may be sand-buried the next; channels that now run free with water for crop may be checked in a



month ; and all the while the great Helmand, curving northward in its course, pours down its steady volume of silt brought from the highlands, carrying tons of debris into open plains where it is spread out, dried, wind-blown and swirled back again southward in everlasting movement.

The Helmand in Seistan is a different river from that of its early course. Its character changes from the point where it makes its great bend north towards its final exit into the lagoons and swamps of the Hamun. At Charburjak the Helmand is a wide, rippling stream when in flood. To its north lies the great flat, wind-swept Dasht-i-Margoo, about as desolate and arid a region as fancy could depict. To the south lies Dasht-i-Zirreh, with its innumerable sand-dunes resembling islands in a sea of sand.

**The Arghandab.**—This is a tributary of the Helmand, and takes its source in the Hazarajat country near Barhaq Pass. It flows in a south-westerly direction, and, after crossing Kilat-i-Ghilzai, it emerges into an open plain and irrigates the richest part of Kandahar province. It is a small stream in winter, but deep and rapid when fed by the melting snow.

Other rivers of this group are : the Khash Rud the Farah Rud, and the Harat. All three rise in the Hazarajat, drain the south-western part of the country and ultimately empty themselves into the Hamun.

**Lakes.**—Afghanistan, in spite of its great size, has very few large lakes. The best known of these are :—

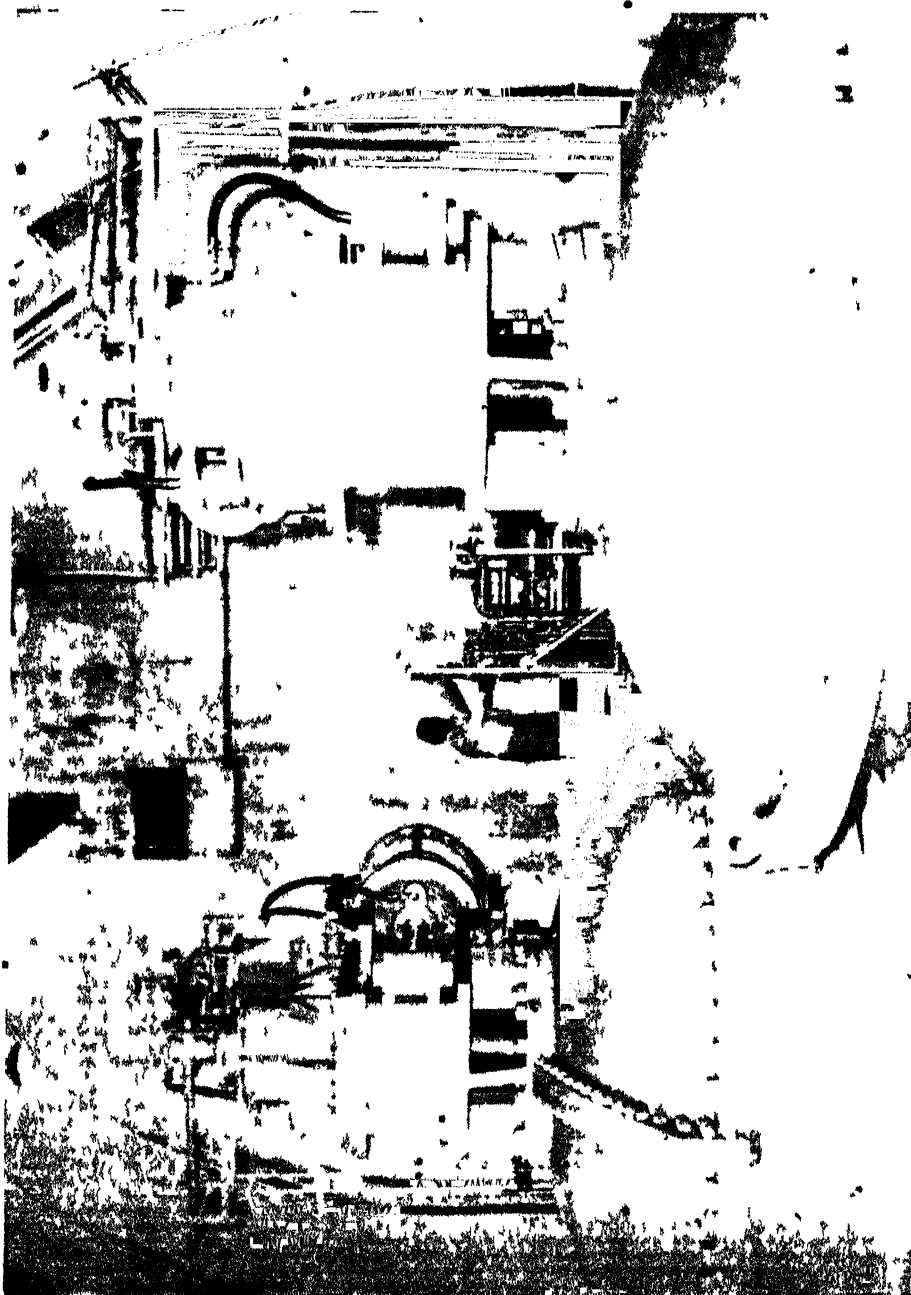
The Hamun-i-Helmand and the Godi Zirreh, lying south-west on the Persian-Afghan border, are shallow salt-lakes. The latter is, perhaps, the most salt lake in the world, for it is said that its waters are even more laden with salt than those of the Dead Sea.

Ab-i-Istadah is another small lake, about 80 miles south of Ghazni. It too, has no outlet, and its water is therefore salt.

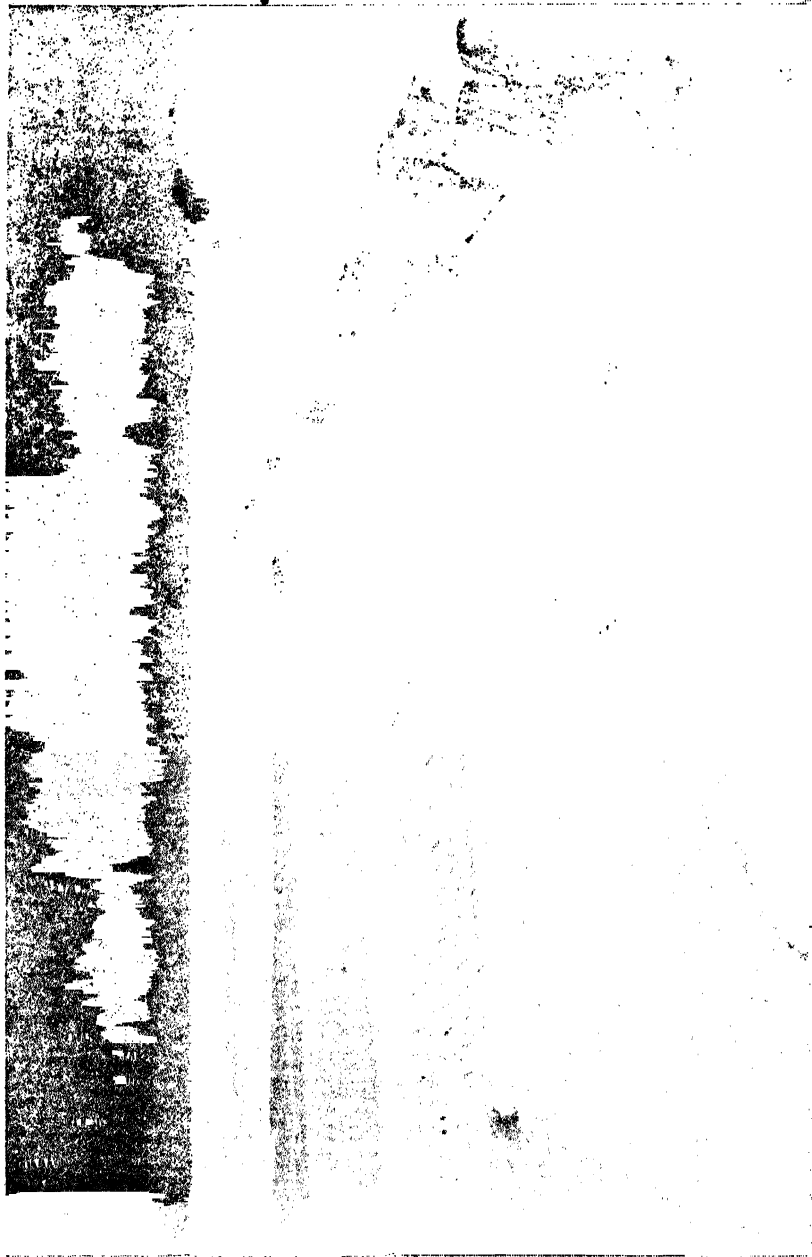
Sarikul (Lake Victoria or Lake Wood) lies north of Wakhan on the Russian border. It is frozen for the greater part of the year. This fine lake lies in the form of a crescent, about 14 miles long from east to west, and with an average breadth of one mile. On three sides it is bounded by swelling hills, not more than 500 feet higher than the level of the lake, while along its southern side it is enclosed by a high mountain some 3,500 feet above the lake, or about 19,000 feet above sea-level. It is covered with perpetual snow, and from this never-failing source the lake is supplied. The surrounding hills and mountains that encircle Sarikul give rise to some of the principal rivers of Central Asia.

Sheva, a lake of blue, sweet water, is situated on the western border of Badakhshan, close to the Oxus. This, too, is very cold and is generally frozen over for three-quarters of the year.

Band-i-Amir is a series of small but extremely beautiful lakes, lying some 50 miles west of Bamian in the lap of the Koh-i-Baba. These fine natural lakes, as we could call them, are encompassed on all sides by high hills of various colours,



A Part of the Kajaki Dam



An irrigated field in the Arghandab Valley, Kandahar,

the reflection of which in the bluish-green and transparent water below, adds to the charm of these lakes.

In addition to these there are a few small salt lakes in the western part of the Herat province. There are also a good many signs of other ancient lakes in this locality which have dried up, and it is on this account that the place is called Namaksar, that is, Salt-Desert.

On the top of the mountain next to Paghman there is a small lake called Hauz-i-Khas, a splendid place for those who are interested in mountaineering.

**Climate.**—The climate of the country, generally speaking, is cold in winter, hot and dry in summer. The central plateau, owing to its higher altitude, is cooler than the rest of the country, which has an intensely high temperature (of over 100° F.) during the summer months (June and July). It is generally characteristic of the Afghan climate that there is a great variation of temperatures between winter and summer, day and night, sun and shade. These variations are, however, less pronounced in the east, where the climate merges with that of pre-partitioned India. On the whole, the climate should be pronounced as extreme, ranging from—12° to 110° F.

Afghanistan is far removed from the moderating influence of the sea. There are no cooling sea breezes to counteract the heat of summer, nor are there warm ocean currents and pleasant westerly winds to mitigate the cold of winter.

High up in any of the numerous and beautiful side valleys or upon the meadowy slopes of the Hindu Kush, Speen Ghar or Koh-i-Baba, almost any gradation of climate is to be had. Thus while at Kabul (6,000 ft.), in July, the mean temperature

is about 80° F. in the valley of Paghman, some 16 miles to the west of the capital and at an elevation of 7,200 feet, the mean temperature would scarcely exceed 60°. Higher up on the slopes of the Paghman range, the average temperature would not exceed 50°, while great extremes of cold nights are met. In stretches which occur at higher levels (8,000 to 10,000 ft.) one gets some extraordinary conditions of temperature. There are places where the ground temperature in the sun may be over 60°, while it is still freezing in the shade.

In the height of summer, when the plain of Jalalabad is extremely sultry, and while the very air is frequently so hot as to cause the death of persons exposed to it, the Afghan Mont Blanc (Speen Ghar) lifts its lofty head, covered with perpetual snow. The nearest hills are cold and pleasant, and the more remote ones are covered with snow. However, the winters of Jalalabad, as well as those of Kandahar, are very agreeable, and are scarcely colder than those of Northern India, while the winters of the central plateau, especially that of Ghazni and Hazarajat, remind one of the severity of a Russian winter. On every side there are glassy sheets of ice for those who like to skate. Afghan children, incidentally are fond of skating and most of them glide on ice with their shoes.

The coldest month of the year is the month of Dalv (corresponding to January 21 to February 20) when the mean temperature falls below zero. The lowest temperature occurs in cold waves, which may last several days.

One of the hottest parts of the country is Seistan, in the extreme south-west. The heat in this part is more deadly than the sword of a human enemy. Here dust-storms occur frequently at all seasons, sometimes changing the light of midday to an intensity of darkness to which no ordinary night ever approaches.

This darkness is sometimes accompanied by a blast of the Simoon—a wind which is generally destructive to vegetables as well as to human and animal life.

Rainfall is very scanty; nowhere more than 15 inches in a year. The Monsoon, which sweeps over India from June to September, brings rain only to the eastern valleys that lead to the Indus, and the rest of the country is totally dry during summer months. Afghanistan gets much of its precipitation as winter snow, and a small but very important contribution of rain in spring. The rainfall of the country is neither certain nor well-distributed. These spring-rains are nearly always accompanied by thunderstorms, hail and sudden downpours, causing great damage to houses, fields, and fruit-trees.

The winter-snow results from the cold north-west winds. Usually there are half a dozen snow-falls (from December to the end of February). Throughout the mountainous districts snow lies on the ground for several months, while the villagers remain inside their huts for the greater part of the day, if there is no sunshine.

One of the chief characteristics of the Afghan climate is the clear blue sky and the large amount of sunshine throughout the year. Almost cloudless skies are the rule in summer, and even in winter, clouds are less numerous than would be expected. The unpleasant chill of winter finds compensation to some extent in the bright sunshine. A comparatively low rainfall and blue skies render the mountain scenery an enticement to the tourists coming from countries of foggy atmosphere.

The dry summer conditions are ideal for the ripening of delicious fruits for which Afghanistan is famous throughout the world. Typical examples are the citrus fruits of Jalalabad

valley, such as oranges and lemons, and great varieties of deciduous fruits—such as apricots, peaches, plums, pears, apples, etc.

By the middle of March or the Naoroz (New Year's Day, corresponding to the 21st of March) the winter breaks up. The spring moves in everywhere—showery, sometimes even windy and rather cold. But by the beginning of May the sun begins to assert itself; the weather continuing pleasant until the beginning of June, when the increasing heat in most areas drives the people to “yelaq”, that is the countryside or the adjoining hills. Judging from the physique, strength and activities of the inhabitants, we should pronounce the Afghan climate on the whole bracing and favourable to the human constitution. Those who have felt the refreshing effects of the strong winds of its lofty mountains and highlands, need not fear for their health and comfort.

The great difference between the seasons and the quickness with which they change has a striking effect on the customs and dress of the inhabitants. In winter all are clad in long woollen garments or skins called Posteen.

They have fires constantly in their houses, and often sleep around stoves (or sandalies). When spring sets in and the snow suddenly disappears, the country is covered with a green carpet of young grass, the buds burst forth, and are soon followed by a profusion of beautiful gay flowers, reminding one of these lines :

And here's that glorious life in bloom,  
Gone are the blankets too,  
As Nature starts to paint again,  
And man comes out to view.



From icicles to merry spray,  
To waterfall and rushing stream :  
Of gardens pleasant and gay,  
Folk on the plains now dream.

With the coming of spring and warmer weather, sports can be enjoyed, many of which continue through the summer and autumn. These range from playing marbles and jumping ropes, to basketball, football, volleyball, tennis, summer camping, buz kashi, horse-back riding, and hikes and picnics.

## Flora and Fauna

**Vegetation and Food-products.**—The uncertainty and scantiness of rainfall, the average of which is not more than 15 inches a year, mostly received in winter and early spring, play an important part in the agricultural life and economic development of the country. A good rainfall naturally affects not only the amount of dry cultivation, called the Lalmi, which depends entirely on spring rains, but it also affects the irrigated crop, called Abi, and the spring-streams and Karezes (subterranean channels).

In the greater part of the country there are two harvests ; the one reaped in summer, called Bahari or the spring-crop, is the result of autumn sowing, and includes wheat, barley, and certain varieties of peas and beans. The second harvest, called Tirmahi or Autumnal, is gathered in autumn from a spring sowing, and includes crops of rice, Indian corn, varieties of millet, mash (phaseolous mungo), tobacco, turnips, and maize, besides other grains of less importance. The loftier regions, such as Hazarajat, Kabul, Asmar and Badakhshan, yield but one harvest.

In addition to these cereals, crops of madder, cotton, clover, hemp and lucerne, are very largely cultivated, clover, trefoil and lucerne from important fodder crops, and when properly irrigated, are said to afford ten to twelve cuttings in the season. They are given green to the cattle during summer, and a large quantity is dried and made into wisps to be used in winter. Green lucerne is given to horses, mules and cattle, sometimes alone, and sometimes chopped and mixed with chaff. Great care is necessary in judging the proper quantity of green lucerne to be given to cloven-footed animals, as they relish it so much that they often over-eat and burst, unless promptly

treated. Vegetables include the egg-plant, spinach, leek, cabbage, cauliflower, marrow, gourd, raddish, carrot, turnip, onion, potato, tomato, garlic, etc.

Of the cucurbitaceous crops, known as Palez, melon, water-melon (Kharbooza and Tarbooz) are the most important. The province of Mazar-i-Sharif is especially noted for its delicious melons. Some of them are said to be so delicate that they would crack if a rider were to pass by them very swiftly, and some are so sweet that one has to take nearly half an inch off the slice before eating it.

Northern Afghanistan is the home of wild-melon, a weed found in the crops of maize, sorghum and cotton. Sometimes it may be observed outside the crops, along the river banks and roads. On the whole expanse of Seistan, from Farah right up to the Iranian border, the wild water-melon is met with. In the desert of Helmand and Bukwa, on the Kandahar-Herat road, vast sandy tracts are covered with the growth of these melons, of the size of an orange. In winter dried fruits are driven by the storms over the deserts like balls.

Other cultivated plants are cotton, sugarcane and beet-root. Sugarcane is grown extensively in the district of Laghman, Jalalabad, Lower Kunar, Chakhansur and Farah. It is chiefly used in making raw sugar, gur as they call it. Recently a sugar mill was established at Jalalabad to make use of sugarcane grown in the district.

Cotton of best quality grows with facility in Northern Afghanistan up to an elevation of 5,000 feet above sea-level. The soil and climate of Kataghan and Mazar-i-Sharif are especially favourable to cotton-growing. Before 1935 the annual output was below 400 tons. Since then it has increased tremendously. Cotton yields have been boosted by seed

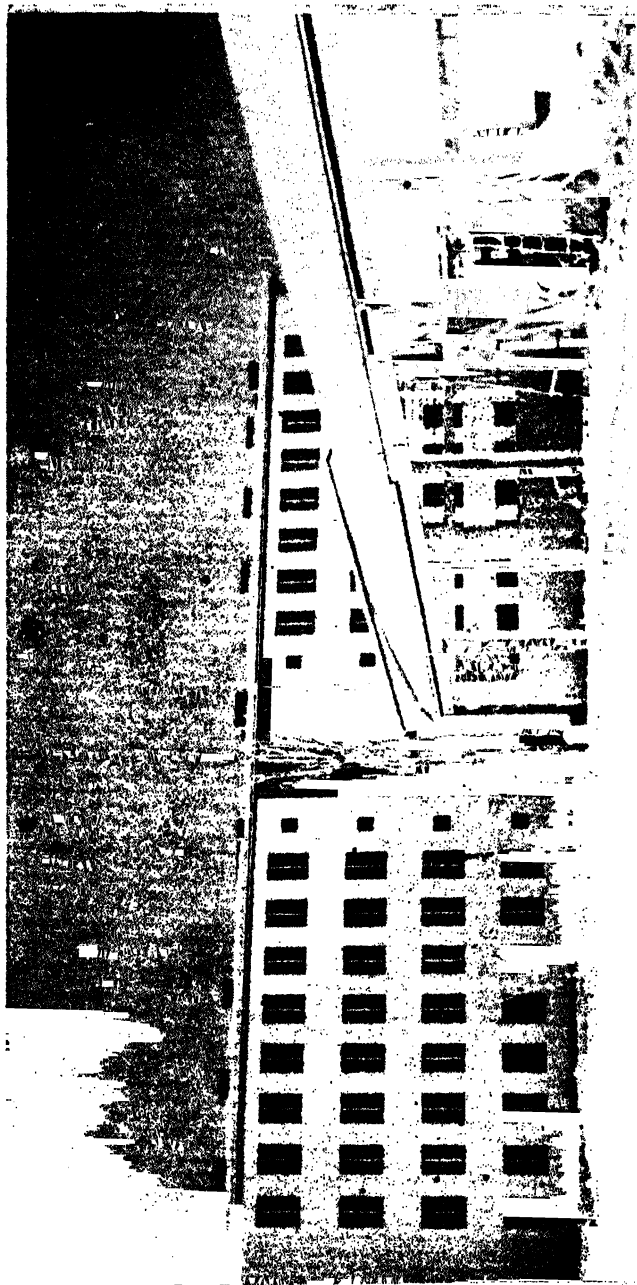
improvement and successful demonstration of the use of long-handled hoe. As a result cotton production which before 1950 rarely exceeded 10,000 tons a year, in 1955 reached 47,270 tons, and is expected to reach 60,000 tons in the near future.

The increase in the production is due to the two-fold encouragement this branch of agriculture has received at the hands of the State. First, direct assistance was rendered by the Government. Taqavi or farm loans were given to the peasants free of interest. Agricultural schools and experimental stations were established. Improved varieties of cotton-seeds were supplied. Several irrigation projects were undertaken and these proved of inestimable value for the increase in cotton production. Finally in 1954 a new Cotton Export Corporation, sponsored by the Government, undertook to spread modern cultivation methods, and to improve seeds and quality of the lint.

Secondly, the state accorded indirect assistance by the protection of cotton-ginning and weaving industries within the country. A large portion of this cotton is consumed locally by the textile-mills and hand-looms, and the surplus is exported.

The cotton grown in the Central Plateau is of low quality, being of very short staple. On the whole, Afghan cotton is much superior in quality to the cotton grown in the adjacent countries and has, therefore, a ready market abroad.

Beet-root is cultivated extensively around Baghlan and is made into sugar at the same place. Sugar-beet harvested in 1953 totalled 23,000 tons, but in the opinion of Edwin P. Pathison, sugar-beet expert of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in Afghanistan, better cultivation and better seed strains are expected to result in a yield of 56,000 to 60,000 tons in the coming years.



Tangalak Factory Kabul.

Afghan National Bank & D'Afghanistan Bank, Kabul.

### **Agricultural Development in Afghanistan.**

At present there are vast plans for the agricultural development of the country, the most important of these being the Helmand Valley Project. The valleys of the north-east are fertile and capable of high productivity, but the south-west, with its great areas of uncultivated or occasionally cultivated land, offers the greatest possibilities for future development. This region is primarily drained by the Helmand River and its system of tributaries. The Helmand Valley is an inland basin, cut off from the sea on all sides by a ring of mountains. The watershed covers a large area, draining the southern slopes of the high Hindukush mountains. The Helmand is the perennial source of considerable size; the low flow during the summer months rarely goes below 1,500 to 2,000 cfs. (42 to 56 cubic meters per sec.).

The Helmand empties into the Hamun-i-Helmand, a series of shallow lakes in the south-western corner of the country, along the Iranian border. Also discharging into the lakes are several other smaller streams which drain the southwestern part of the country, viz., the Adraskand, Farah, Khuspas, Khash Rud and Dor Rud. These streams may have flood discharges of considerable magnitude, but the annual flow is largely taken for upstream irrigation, and in general they are intermittent streams; the lower reaches are usually dry during a large part of the year.

There is evidence that Hamun-i-Helmand was once of very much greater extent. In the past ages, the rivers discharging into this great inland sea carried large quantities of sediments which were deposited on the lake floor during a long period of time. With change of climate the sea receded, exposing a broad flat terrain of deep silt. That portion of this region which lies in Afghanistan is known as Chakhansur. This area has probably been cultivated to a greater or lesser extent since the dawn of

history, as evidenced by the innumerable cultural ruins of all ages which abound. This region suffers from an adverse climate, however, since the normal rainfall is very low (probably about 5 inches per year), the weather is hot and dry for long periods, and a hot, strong wind blows continuously for four months during the summer causing heavy wind erosion, dust storms and areas of active sand dunes. Furthermore, in some sections the soil is saline, and has an inherent low fertility. In spite of these drawbacks, vast areas have apparently been cultivated in the past and supported large populations, but today the population is sparse and only a comparatively small portion of land is being farmed.

Additional arable land exists in the flood plains bordering all the river valleys; also some valuable soils occur in the alluvial bottoms of the "mandas" and dry washes on the higher desert benches, where silt is dropped during run-off periods. The latter areas are usually of small extent, and offer only limited opportunities for cultivation.

Owing to the arid and dry climate practically all cultivation in southern Afghanistan must be supported by irrigation. Irrigation water has generally been obtained, within the period of recent history at least, on a local community basis, either by direct diversions from the rivers—often augmented during low flow by temporary brush dikes, or from karez. The annual run-off of the rivers is sufficient to irrigate much larger areas than have actually been cultivated, but owing to the fact that about 70% of the flow occurs during three months in the spring, most of the water cannot be utilised and runs to waste, while during the rest of the year the flow is inadequate. This unequal distribution puts definite limitations on the extent of cultivation and types of crops which can be raised. By storing excess of the



spring floods in reservoirs, and then by regulated release of this water as needed during the rest of the year, it is possible to put a much larger proportion of the total amount of available water to productive use and to permit agricultural expansion, at the same time alleviating the ill effects of destructive floods.

The Government of Afghanistan, with this object in view, entered into contract with Morrison-Knudson, an American firm, for engineering studies, designs and construction (in 1946). The Company has been continuously engaged on these projects from that time to this day.

The first construction projects entered upon were the Boghra Diversion Dam on the Helmand River, a few miles above Grishk, and the Boghra Canal. The Canal had been started some years previously and had been partially excavated by hand labour methods. After MKA took over the contract, they brought in heavy equipment and tractors, "Carryall" scrapers power shovels and draglines of large capacity, etc., and the job proceeded on a production basis. By May of 1950, the first 40 miles of the canal had been dug and the necessary concrete structures built, including three long, large-diameter siphons and three shorter siphons crossing under major "Mandas". At one point in the canal, near Girishk, a power drop was provided, and the concrete structures for a hydro-electric power plant was built to provide for future power installation.

In April, 1950, the Government entered into a second contract with MKA for additional public works construction, and negotiated an agreement with the U. S. Export-Import Bank of Washington for a loan of 21 million dollars to finance the work. The new contract provided for the construction of (1) a dam on the Helmand near Kajaki, about 60 miles above Grishk, (2) a dam on the Arghandad river, below the village of Dahla

about 25 miles from Kandahar, and (3) extension of the Boghra canal some 35 miles into the Dasht-i-Margo, and also another branch-canal some 65 miles long, following the flood plain of the Helmand near the village of Shamalan.

Work on the above program proceeded with despatch. By the end of 1950, excavation of the Boghra Canal to its farthest extent in the Marja desert was completed.

Actual construction of the Kajaki Dam got underway in July 1951, and it was completed by January 1953. The site selected for this dam is at a point where the river flows through a deep narrow canyon in a limestone ridge. Just above this site the valley widens into a broad alluvial plain, providing an exceptional combination of a vast reservoir impounded by a very short dam.

At full development, the capacity of the lake is nearly 3,000,000 acre-feet (3,500 million cubic meters). The dam is of composite earth and *rockfill* type with a rolled-filled impervious core. The maximum height of the embankment above the foundation is 94 metres, and the length along the crest is 273 metres. The width of the dam at the base is over 400 metres. The total volume of material placed in the fill is about 3,225,000 cubic metres of which 1,285,000 cubic metres is rock. The dam also provides for building a hydro-electric plant and installing three turbines and generator units with a total capacity of some 120,000 kilowatts. This plant will be built in the future when markets and demand have developed for power of this magnitude.

The amount of land which has been farmed in the valley within the recent past is not known, but it is estimated that perhaps 350,000 jereeb (one jereeb is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an acre) may be in crops in any one year. By the construction of the Kajaki Dam not only will

the acreage be increased by bringing in new lands under irrigation, but all areas will be benefited by the increased and dependable supply of water which the dam will sustain. Furthermore, it will make possible the double-cropping of a large proportion of the area, *i. e.*, two seasonal crops can be harvested from the same land each year, which in effect doubles this acreage.

Arghandab Dam is located in a narrow valley in a region of low mountain ridges, about 25 miles above where the river breaks out onto the broad plain. The dam is about 60 metres high above the rock base at maximum section, and 50 metres high above the old river bed. The width of the base of the dam at the maximum section is about 230 metres and the length along the crest is 520 metres. It is a rolled-filled earth structure, and the embankment contains about 2,500,000 cubic metres of water. This dam will play a great rôle in the economic and social developments of the Arghandab Valley. It will also help in generating electricity, some 6,500 kw, which is badly needed at Kandahar.

## AGRICULTURE IN AFGHANISTAN

In most parts of the country agriculture is primitive and produces only a small part of what could be produced if the water-supply were fully developed, and the best farming methods were used.

Wheat is the principal crop, and in many places, the only crop grown. Much of it is grown under the old system in which the land produces one crop in two or three years, lying idle in the alternate years. This is due partly to shortage of water, but it is also commonly believed to be necessary to keep the fertility of the land high. In a few places where soil fertility is unusually high or where abundant manure is available, the wheat crop is followed in the same year by a crop of corn

(maize). In other places, corn, which is the second most important crop in most parts of the country, is grown largely on land that has produced only grass for a number of years.

Pasture for livestock is seldom purposely grown, but usually consists of natural vegetation, wheat-stubble, or other crop residues. In certain places, where moisture conditions are usually good and grasses invade the land, a good pasture may exist, but often the forage is coarse and unpalatable, and not capable of feeding large numbers of livestock. Improved irrigated pastures, consisting of selected plants, such as clover and good pasture grasses may help in feeding livestock, which are generally underfed. Fertilization is practised to some extent but much less than it could be to good advantage. Animal manure, night-soil and ashes are the fertilizers generally used. Chemical fertilizers are not yet popular, although they would increase crop yields on many soils. Manure (cow-dung) is commonly made into cakes and burned for fuel, and this destroys much of its fertilising value, even if the ashes are applied to the land.

Farming is done largely by hand. The wooden plow, drawn by oxen, is the only common piece of farm equipment not worked by hand. Common tools are irrigation shovels, and hand-sickles. Small plots and tough sods are commonly spaded, whereas fields are generally plowed. Wheat is harvested with the sickle and collected in circular piles. The grain is trodded out by yoked cattle which are driven round and round on the piles. The grain is then separated from the chaff by winnowing—tossing the tramped mixture into the air and allowing the wind to blow away the chaff. This very slow and laborious system of harvesting and threshing is nearly the same that was in vogue some 2,000 years before in this part of the

world. It requires much labour, and the threshed grain is often very dirty. It is more wasteful of grain than in modern methods of harvesting by machinery.

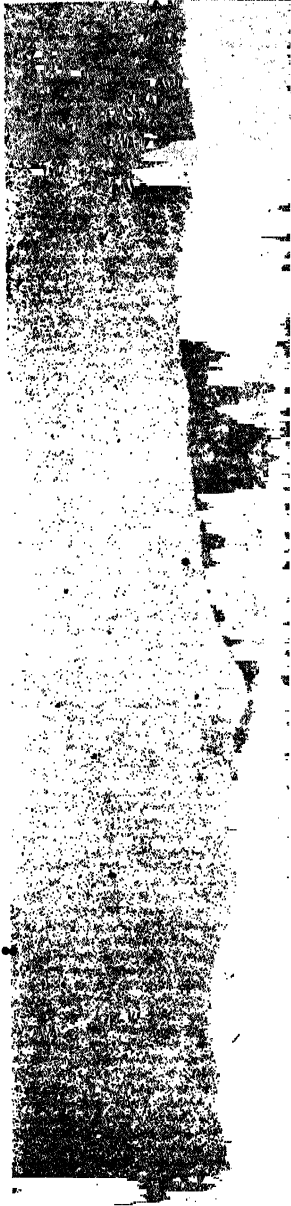
• Grapes are grown in a unique way, unknown in the other parts of the world. The vines are planted in trenches and trained upon high earthen ridges. This system, which is almost universal here, has both advantages and disadvantages. The ridges, once they are built, support the vine and protect the fruit from wind and excessive sunshine, and the trenches make irrigation easy. The fruit is sometimes damaged, however, if the ridges become wet through rain during the ripening period, although rain at this season is very rare here. Another disadvantage is that this system is waste of land, that is, fewer vines can be planted on each jareeb of land and, therefore, yields are less than when vines are planted by other systems. Still another disadvantage is the enormous amount of hand labour required in excavating the trenches and building the ridges.

Cultivation, as it is commonly practised in Western countries, is almost unknown in Afghanistan. The only crops grown in rows are some of the vegetables and melons which are grown on raised beds or ridges. Carrots are commonly grown in this way. Wheat, corn and most vegetable seeds are broadcast on flat ground. Weeds are pulled by hand or cut off with the sickle. Hard crusting of the surface soil after irrigation is a common trouble under this system, and this commonly prevents seedlings from emerging from the soil. It also causes a dense, hard condition of the soil that is unfavourable for the growth of many crop plants. The hard crusting and dense condition can be prevented to a considerable extent by mulching or heavy manuring.

Livestock is grown both on the range and on the farms, but the number could be increased considerably and the quality could be greatly improved by providing better pastures and forage and by scientific breeding.

The commonest domestic animals are sheep and goats, but they are raised more on the desert range than on the farms. Close grazing by these animals over many countries has destroyed most of the vegetation over large areas. They are efficient meat-producers and also yield valuable wool, mohair, skin and milk. On account of their destructive nature, however, they should be well herded and kept away from valuable crops and trees.

Cattle, although abundant on some farms, are less common than sheep. They are used as work animals and milk producers, and also produce meat and hides. Beef is not widely used here, and is lean, tough and of low quality. The cows are also poor milk producers. The inferior quality of the cattle is due partly to poor breeding and partly to lack of nourishing feed, as they are seldom fed grain or hay, and must get most of their subsistence from poor pastures or stubble fields.



Northern Afghanistan. A herd of horses and camels.





## Irrigation in Afghanistan

The dry summer conditions necessitate irrigation of farm lands by means of streams which get water from the rivers or directly from the melting snow. This type of irrigation is generally confined to the high mountain districts. The inhabitants of these districts have shown remarkable skill in conducting water along the ledges.

Another system, very ingenuous and ancient, is known by the name of "Karez". It means conducting water through underground canals for the purpose of irrigation. This system is in vogue in various parts of the country, chiefly at the foot of mountains and in broad valleys surrounded by hills. The spot, where the water is to issue, must always be at the foot of a slope extending to a hill, and the ground must be examined to ascertain whether there are springs, and in what direction they lie.

In the selection of a site for a Karez the excavators are guided solely by experience and have no scientific appurtenances for assistance. A site is generally taken along the bank of a hill torrent or when such a torrent debouches from the mountains into the valley. Note is also taken of the appearance of the moisture and of the presence of moisture-loving shrubs and grasses. The next step is to dig one or two trial wells, and if they prove successful, a succession of wells are dug and connected by tunnels until the water reaches the surface. When a Karez is once constructed, its wells are of no further use, except to allow a man to descend occasionally to clear out the channel. The distances between the wells varies from 50 to 100 yards. Sometimes these tunnels have been pushed back as much as twenty miles.

In order to increase the supply of water it is sometimes found necessary to construct several branches at the top of the Karez. The cost of construction of a Karez varies with its length and the nature of the soil. The excavation of a Karez is expensive, and is generally constructed by joint capital and owned by several co-sharers. Passage of a Karez through land belonging to a stranger is allowed on payment in the form of a share in the Karez or cash.

Construction of dams or water-storage reservoirs, to hold up flood water, has been in vogue in this country from very ancient times. Remains of dams constructed even before the advent of Islam are to be seen in different parts of the country. Four such ancient dams, said to be constructed by Sultan Mahmood of Ghazni (998-1030 A. D.), are still to be seen in the vicinity of Ghazni. One of them known as Band-i-Sultan (Sultan's Dam) has been recently reconstructed, and is now known by the name of Band-i-Seraj. The present Government, alive to the importance of such dams in this country, has completed nearly half a dozen of these within the space of the last few years. Of these the Kajaki Dam and the Arghandab Dam are the most important. The construction of these water reservoirs has greatly improved the condition of the peasantry, and this creation of new acreage has, undoubtedly, been a strong inducement for the unsettled nomadic tribes to adopt a sedentary and peaceful mode of life.

Artesian wells are not yet very popular with the people. In some parts of the country use is made of the Persian water-wheel (Arhat) for purposes of irrigation.

## Fruits

The Afghans are a fruit-loving people, and the dry summer conditions of the country play a great rôle in the development of this industry, for which Afghanistan has acquired world-wide fame. One encounters beautiful gardens and orchards throughout the country, where conditions are favourable. The lowland of Jalalabad is famous for some fine species of citrus fruits. Great varieties of deciduous fruits, such as apricots, peaches, plums, pears, and apples, as well as almonds, figs, pomegranates, mulberries, walnuts and pistachios grow well in higher altitudes. Several kinds of grapes, from pure white to dark black, in different sizes, shapes and flavours are found in different parts of the country, but especially in the districts of Kandahar, Herat and Koh Daman.

The wild fruit trees and shrubs play by no means an unimportant part in the nourishment of the people and foreign trade of the country. Of these, pistachios occupies the first place, this being a product of the northern districts—from Herat to Kataghan. The pistachio tree generally grows on the loess hillocks.

In south-western Afghanistan and in the forest zones of the eastern and southern provinces, different species of hawthorns, blackberries and current bushes are found in great numbers. Whole thickets of barberry cover the river valleys of the high mountains round Badakhshan and Nuristan. The nuts of the edible pine (pignolia or Jalghoza as it is locally called) are also one of the chief articles of food, and large quantities are exported abroad. Besides, the country is extremely rich in some medicinal plants, but so far only a few of them are made use of.

## Forest Vegetation

The forest vegetation of the country is extensive and varied. The main ranges of the Speen Ghar and Asmar (in Nuristan) are covered with dense coniferous forests. There are trees such as *cedrus deodara*, *abies excelsa*, *pinus longifolia*, *pinus piaster*, *pinus pinea* (or the edible pine), and *larix communis*. Besides these, yew, hazel, juniper, wild walnut wild peach and almond trees are also frequently met with in these forests. Under the shade of these trees grow several varieties of roses, honeysuckle, currants, gooseberries and hawthorns. The wild lemon and vines are also very common. On the secondary heights, adler, ash, Khinjik, arbor-vitæ, commercial indigo, dwarf laburnum, etc., grow extensively. Lower still and down to 3,000 feet, the eye meets wild olive, specimens of rock-roses, wild privet, acacia, mimosa, barberry, wild palm and zizypus. Important forest products are: timber, resin, charcoal, honey, wax, and pignolia. The dense natural forests of Afghanistan stand mainly in the eastern and north-western areas. The actual area of these natural forests has not been determined so far, although their general boundaries are pretty well-known. It has been estimated that these natural forests do not occupy in excess of two-and-a-half per cent of the land area of Afghanistan.

In addition to the dense forests there are certain other lands occupied by shrubs and scattered tree growths. These are more extensive and of great importance but do not yield large quantities of forest products.

People who have made special studies of the flora of Afghanistan claim that the dense and scattered forests were once considerably greater in area and better in quality than now. Their studies seem to conclude that forests and grass resources have

so decreased that the climate of the country has been affected, resulting particularly in less rainfall and greater variation of temperatures between winter and summer. Besides, throughout the country and particularly on the arid-desert type of lands, there is an urgent need for fuel. The Government of Afghanistan is very keen to preserve these natural forests as well as the grazing lands, and steps are being taken for reforestation.

## Animals

Afghanistan is noted for its wild animals. The most important of these are : the wolf, fox, hyena, wild dog, wild cat, jungle cat, common leopard, small Indian fox, mongoose, wild sheep, onager (wild ass), mole, talpidae, Indian shrew, collared-hedgehog, bats, jerboa, gerbit, deer, oorial, ibex, pica and hare.

The wolves are particularly formidable during winter in the cold districts when the land is covered with snow, and they roam about in search of food. They often form packs and, coming down the hills, prowl near villages, frequently destroying cattle, sometimes even attacking men. They are said to run ahead of their victim, and with their hind legs throw up snow on his face and body, and, when they see that his hands and feet are benumbed by the effect of snow, they fall upon him and tear him to pieces. During winter one hears strange stories about the daring of this ferocious animal.

The villagers use various methods to defend themselves when attacked. When one of them is pursued by a wolf, with no fire-arms to frighten him off, he generally follows this simple method to get rid of his enemy. Tying one of his shoes to the end of his turban, and holding the other end in his hand, he lets the shoe trail after him. The wolf coming nearer his victim is attracted by the shoe and tries to catch it, but finding it moving forward, leaps aside. So this continues; the shoe keeping the wolf occupied and at a respectable distance. Meanwhile the villager, if fortunate, reaches his destination, and the wolf, finding his life in danger, makes for the neighbouring hills. The bear is also very common in all the wooded districts, but it seldom quits its haunts. The bears are of two colours, black

and grey. The tiger is found near Kunduz, among reeds by the river sides. But now that the wastelands in and around Kunduz are being brought under cultivation, the number of tigers is fast diminishing.

The mountains, especially to the east and north, hold several species of the goat family, notably the Markhor, orial and ibex. There is a fine kind of wild sheep in the Afghan Pamir, usually known by the name of *Ovis Poli*, whose horns form one of the most prized trophies in the sportsman's collection. These wild sheep, perhaps the largest of the class, whose long curved horns often measure sixty inches in length, were first made known to Europe by the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, who visited the Pamirs in the 13th century A.D., on his way back to his native land, and from whom the sheep derives its Latin name.

The deer is also of two kinds: one called "Kohi" (mountain-bred) is found mostly in the central plateau on mountain sides; the other called "Dashti" (of plains) is mostly met with in the deserts of Bukwa, Chakhansur (bordering Seistan Lake), in the country around Herat, and in the northern plains.

Horses, camels, donkeys, sheep, goats, ponies, dogs and cats are the principal domestic animals. The horse claims the first place among all the domestic animals. A considerable number of horses are bred in every part of the country, but those of Kataghan and Mazar-i-Sharif are considered best. Camels are of two kinds; the ordinary one, which is comparatively taller and is generally used in deserts and plains; and the second, the two-humped Bactrian camel, which due to its long shaggy hair can easily stand the intense cold of Afghan winters.

There are different kinds of sheep, such as the Turki, Ghilji, Hazaragi, and Kandahari. There is another famous breed of sheep—the Karakuli—which is reared for the sake of its skins. All Afghan sheep are remarkable for their distinctive fat tails, which are over a foot broad, and almost entirely composed of fat.

Northern Afghanistan presents an expanse only slightly elevated (average altitude being 2,000 feet above sea-level), with loess-like deep soil, mostly arable, or readily accessible to cultivation. A great part of this region forms an immense pasture, where throngs of livestock from many parts of the country come to graze. It is also here that the famous Karakuli sheep are reared. Every year millions of their newly-born lambs are killed for their fine glistening skins which have a ready market abroad, and, from an economic point of view, form the chief source of Afghan revenue.

Of the cows, those of the Kunar District, though of short stature, are considered the best. It is related that the pick of these Kunar oxen were sent to Macedonia by Alexander the Great to improve the breed there. Of the cats, the Burraqi, (Persian cat) is very famous and is noted for its long, lustrous and silky hair. Next in importance is the greyhound of Ghazni District, which has come to be known as the Afghan hound in foreign countries.

In Wakhan, in the extreme north-eastern corner of the country, herds of yak (Ghazhgaw) are met with. The yak stands about three feet and a half at the shoulders, and is a hairy and powerful animal, with its belly reaching within six inches of the ground, which is swept by its bushy tail. The long hair, streaming down from its dewlap and from its legs,





The new motor-road between Kabul and Sarobi *via* Tong-i-Gharu gorge.



**Typical Afghan mountain scenery.**

gives it, but for the horns, the appearance of a huge Newfoundland dog.

The yak is to the inhabitants of the Pamir what the reindeer is to the Laplanders in Northern Europe. Like the elephant it possesses a clear knowledge of what will bear its weight. If travellers are at fault, one of these animals is driven before them, and it is said that it avoids the hidden depths and chasms with admirable sagacity. Its footing is sure, and faults are seldom noticed. Should a fall of snow close a mountain pass to man and horse, a score of yaks driven ahead answer the purpose of the pioneers. •

The yak usually frequents the mountain slopes and their level summits. Whenever the mercury does not rise above zero, it is the season most suitable for the activities of this animal. If the snow on the elevated flats lies too deep for him to crop the herbage, he rolls himself down the slopes and eats its way up again. The heat of summer sends the animal to what is termed the old snow, that is, the region of eternal snow; the calf being retained below as hostage for the mother's return, in which she never fails.

In the summer the Kirghiz women, like the pastoral inhabitants of the Alps, encamp in the higher valleys which are interspersed among the snowy mountains and devote their whole time to dairying. The men remain on the plains below and attend to the agricultural part of the establishment, but occasionally visit the upper stations; and all speak with rapture of these summer wanderings.

The yak's hair is clipped once a year, in spring. The strong, wiry and pliant hair of the tail is made into ropes, which for strength is the equal of that manufactured from hemp. The hair of the body is woven into mats and also into a strong fabric

which makes an excellent riding trousers. The milk of the yak is richer than that of the common cow, though the quantity it yields is less.

### **Birds .**

There are some 124 species of birds. Goose and duck shooting is excellent in late autumn or early spring. There are several varieties of partridges and pheasants. The Afghan pheasants are good birds of the European type akin to English pheasant, only larger and with more brilliant plumage. These pheasants are very plentiful in northern districts, especially in the marshes on the banks of the Oxus.

Fowls such as hens, ducks, geese and turkeys are reared in large numbers. There are various kinds of pigeons—green, blue and grey, and cooing doves and cuckoos. Besides these, hosts of little birds are to be seen, as well as brilliantly coloured ones, like the golden oriole, the paradise fly-catcher, with its floating tail like a silver ribbon; the king-fisher, and various kinds of finches, bulbuls (nightingales) and song-birds.

## Structure and Minerals

The whole central range resembles the other great mountain chains of the world in that it is a great mass of folded mountains, which arose at the same time as the Alps of Europe, the Himalayas of Asia and the Rockies of North America. It is a type of Tertiary folded mountain chain. In between these folded mountains are blocks of ancient rocks which are said to be extremely rich in metallic minerals. Besides gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, coal, chrome and other useful metals, the country possesses some potentially good oil-fields, mostly situated north of the Hindukush, in the vicinity of Herat, Saripul, Maimanah, Shibarghan and Taluqan.

Afghanistan's reserves of coal are no less than 20,000,000 tons and its reserves of high grade iron are about 3,000,000 tons. This is based on the statement of Mr. C. Watson Owings, American mining engineer, whose services were provided to the Afghan Government by the United States Technical Cooperation Administration.

The figure of 20,000,000 tons is for known coal reserves. Mr. Owings believes that complete geological exploration of the country would result in the discovery of reserves much larger than this.

The largest coal reserves are around Darrah-i-Soof, about 100 miles south of Mazar-i-Sharif. Reserves here are not less than 14,500,000 tons. Mr. Owings says: "Judging from surface out-croppings, the tonnage may be twice as large. About half the coal in these seams appears to be in the Tor Valley, and half of it seems to be hard lump coal of high heating value".

At Karkar, in the mountains near Pul-i-Khumri, are coal reserves totalling 4,000,000 tons, while at least 40,000 tons remain at Ishpushta, which gives Kabul its present coal supply. About 63 miles northeast of Herat are other reserves of hard lump coal totalling at least another 1,000,000 tons.

Mr. Owings estimated that at the present rate of coal extraction in Afghanistan—about 15,000 tons a year—proved reserves of 20,000,000 tons would last 1333 years, or well after the age of nuclear energy may have made coal less important.

On the same trip, the mining engineers looked over iron ore deposits at Haji-Alam, about 25 miles east of Kajaki Dam (Kandahar Province). The iron ore here, in hematite form, assays an average of 64 per cent iron content. Mr. Owings says, "This is an average much higher than the average of ore in the famous Mesabi iron range of Minnesota, which has afforded most of the ore for the American steel industry."

Afghanistan, according to these engineers, also has sizable quantities of chrome and sulphur. There is a deposit of more than a million tons of high grade sulphur 35 miles west of Mazar-i-Sharif, for which, in Mr. Owing's opinion, there should be an excellent market in India and Pakistan.

The output of minerals at present, due to lack of necessary implements and transport facilities, is very slight. Some coal of jurassic type is obtained from Ishpushta, 180 miles north of Kabul, and is transported to the capital by means of trucks, and is used locally. Another coal-mine which is being worked, lies at Karkar, ten miles from Baghlan. Coal extracted from this mine is consumed by the Baghlan Sugar Mills, and a part is utilized by the Textile Factory at Puli-Khumri. The seam of

this coal is from two to eight metres in thickness and extends to a length of some ten miles.

Afghanistan is extremely rich in water-power. It is estimated that this power, if properly utilized, could make the country independent of other sources of energy. Steps are being taken to harness and make full use of these great natural resources for the development of combined irrigation and hydro-electric projects.

**Salt Mines and Lakes :** More than eight salt deposits have been discovered so far, and some of these are being worked successfully now. All salt mines and salt lakes are owned and operated by the Government.

**Kataghan Mine :** This mine was started eight years ago. It is located 28 miles away from the Taluqan mines. Mules are used to transport salt over the four miles from the mine to the road. It now has about 20,000 of 80 pound blocks of rock salt and has produced about 100 tons of fine salt.

The rock salt deposit is very thick. The top soil is removed so that the salt can be mined with picks.

**Taluqan Mine :** This mine is located between the cities of Taluqan and Khanabad. It produces 160,000 to 192,000 pounds of salt a day, or 21,000 tons a year.

**Salt Lakes :** About 43 miles south of Andkhai and about 14 miles east is a lake about 8 miles long and two miles wide, which is fed by salt springs. During the month of March, April and May, when the rainfall is heaviest, the lake is covered with about 20 cms. of water. In late summer the water evaporates. Collection of salt begins in August. About 10,000 tons of salt

a year is collected. Most of the salt from this lake goes to the Maimanah District.

On the Iranian border about 117 miles southwest of Herat, there too is a salt lake. Herat obtains most of its salt from this source.



## **Afghanistan's Electric Power, Present and Planned**

At present only 16,000 kw of power, including diesel, is available in Afghanistan, but plans are made for the development of hydro-electricity, some of which are already nearing completion. Here is the description of all these plans, completed and under construction :

**Chak-i-Wardak Power Station:** This is located on the Wardak river about 57 miles south of Kabul. This 16-year-old plant has three Siemens turbo-generators, each of 1,400 kw, and each generating 1,100 kw. The maximum generation of 3,300 kw is all for Kabul. From the dam to the power house there is a canal from two-and-a-half to three miles, which leads into a two-metre steel flume with a 25 metre drop. Round steel pole transmission line support is used, with three-wire transmission at 44,000 volts. If the water supply is sufficient, the plant operates 24 hours a day; during low water periods it operates from 6.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. There are no plans for its expansion.

**Jabalus Seraj Power Station:** This plant, located on the Salung River about 45 miles north of Kabul, has two General Electric generators of 500 and 600 kw, both installed 45 years ago when the plant was built. It also has two Siemens generators of 960 kva, one three and the other eight years old. Maximum generation is 1,900 kw, with average at 1,600 kw. Only two machines are used, since there is never sufficient water for more. Of the kw generated, 1,300 to 1,500 goes to Kabul, 200 kw goes to Jabal Seraj and Charikar, and 200 to 400 kw goes to nearby textile plant. Water from the dam, which is located one mile up-river from station, flows through a canal to enter a one-and-a-half metre flume just above the

power house, with a 38 metre drop. There are no plans for expansion of this plant. However, when the Sarobi plant (see below) is completed, power from the Jabal Seraj plant will be used for textile and cement plants, and the 220 volt transmission will be left intact to handle Kabul in an emergency.

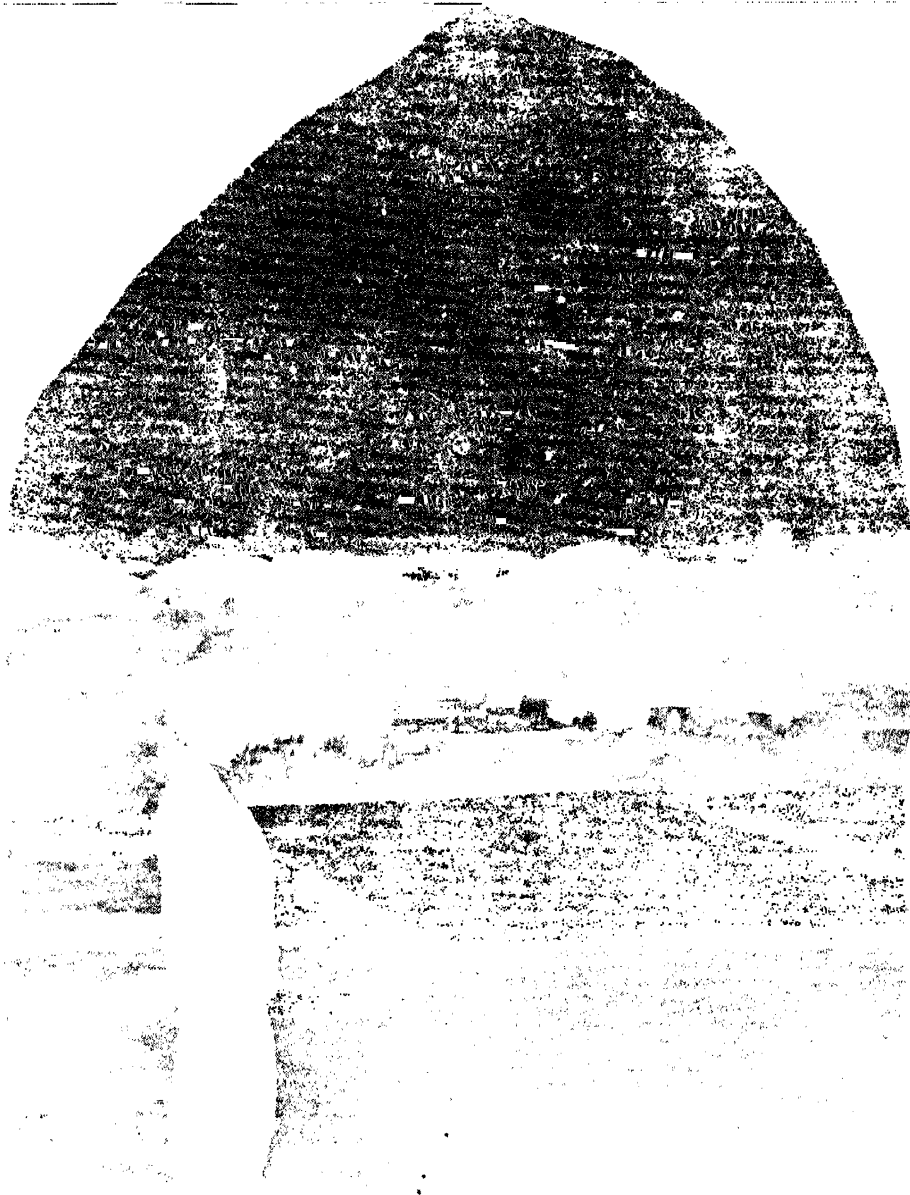
**Sarobi Hydro-Electric Plant:** This is situated on the Kabul river, approximately 45 miles east of Kabul and about 55 miles southeast of Gulbahar. Construction, began in 1951, and it was completed by the middle of 1957. The dam is 80 feet high, with a 3,700 metre long tunnel leading to a four-and-a-half metre steel-lined flume, with a drop of 170 feet.

This plant provides 11,000 kw for Kabul and another 11,000 kw for Gul Bahar Textile Mills. Original cost of the Sarobi installations was 500,000,000 Afghanis.

Future plans for Sarobi envisage the construction of a dam six miles upstream from Dam No. 1, by means of which more water and better control will be obtained, generating 60,000 kw and increasing the capacities of the three power plants to 44,000 kw each, making a total of 190,000 kw. This, however, will take years to complete. With the initial phase completed, Kabul now gets 11,000 kw from Sarobi and 3,300 kw from Chak-i-Wardak, or a maximum of 14,300 kw.

There is also a plan to build a dam on the Panjsher river, near Gul Bahar. This will give an addition of 13,000 kw.

**Kandahar Electric Plant:** The present capacity for Kandahar is only 250 kw and operates 4 hours a day. The Woolen Mills also generate 275 kw and shares this power for electric lighting in the city. It is planned that a power plant at the Arghandab Dam, 25 miles north of Kandahar will supply some 6,500 kw of electricity.



**A Typical Afghan Village.**



Rope & mat-weaving in the old fashion.

**The Kajaki Dam :** This dam is constructed on the Helmund about 100 miles north-west of Kandahar. It has a power capacity of 120,000 kw. It is planned to utilise this power in the industrial development of the Helmund Valley.

- **Girishk :** There are plans for two 1,500 kw generators and possibly a third on the diversion dam on the Boghra Canal near Girishk.

**Herat :** A 100 kw hydro-electric plant is located on the edge of the city. The local electric company uses alternately two diesels of 625 kw capacity each. Future plans include a dam 80 miles east of Herat to irrigate 50,000 acres of land and to produce 20,000 kw of electricity.

**Maimanah :** At present 36 kw is generated by diesel engines for lighting only. Future plan provide for a 700 kw hydro-electric plant, 15 miles north of Maimanah.

**Mazar-i-Sharif :** The Electric Company has a 36 kw hydro-electric plant for lights only. The company has additional capacity of 320 kw, which will operate in the near future.

**Kunduz :** Present power is provided by the Cotton Company mainly for its own use. Future plans include a hydro-electric plant on the Khanabad river near Khanabad with a capacity of 500 kw for the cotton company, and 200 kw for lighting the city of Kunduz. There is also a plan for 4,500 kw Kowajaghan hydro-electric plant for the use of the Cotton Company.

**Taluqan :** There is a small hydro-electric plant for lighting only. Other power is derived mainly for the use of the Cotton Company.

**Puli-Khumri:** A hydel plant on the Kunduz River produces an average of 2,000 kw for the Textile Company, besides 80 to 120 kw for Karakar coal mines, about 10 miles from the city. Further plans contemplate installation of two more generators of 2,000 kw each. Six additional power stations of equal size are projected from Baghlan to Puli-Khumri.

### **Handicrafts & Manufactures**

Industrially, Afghanistan is still under-developed, though the country is rich in minerals and possesses immense productive potentialities. There are at present four textile mills—two woollen (located at Kandahar and Kabul), and two cotton, one at Puli-Khumri and the other at Jabalus-Seraj. There is also a sugar mill at Baghlan which supplies nearly a one-third of the annual requirements of sugar of the country. Besides these, a new textile mill is being established at Gul Bahar and a sugar mill at Jalalabad.

**The Cotton Industry :** Perhaps the most important industrial development in Afghanistan is the Cotton Company, which has its headquarters at Kunduz. This Company started ginning cotton in 1935. It has now 13 plants with 37 gins. There are plans for constructing more gins in different parts of the country, including Herat and Kandahar, to a total of 48.

The Cotton Company supplies cotton seeds and lends money to the farmers to make it possible for them to grow cotton. In turn, it buys cotton raised by the farmers. In 1954 it purchased 32,353 metric tons, which grew on 85,500 acres of land. In 1955, 169,000 acres were planted and the estimated yield was 47,270 metric tons. The Company sent 320,000 pounds of seeds to the Helmund Valley and expects a yield of 2,000 metric tons from that quarter also.

The Company not only buys, gins, and bales cotton it also manufactures by-products, including cottonseed oil, ceramics, and in some parts of Afghanistan it bales wool.

As part of its plans for the expansion of the cotton industry, the Company distributes chemical fertilisers. It operates a 175-acre experimental farm at Kunduz, where the Ministry of Agriculture also has a 500-acre experimental farm. A mulberry

farm has been started for experimentation with the Japanese mulberry tree. The Company plans to improve and expand the silk industry also.

The Company has District Representatives located in the areas of its operation. Cotton is delivered by the farmers to these representatives; the Company trucks it to the plant. The importance of grading is emphasized, and the Company conducts courses in grading at its plant in Kunduz. At present it purchases cotton from the farmers in four grades. The statistical department of the Company reports that cotton ranks first in crop value per acre to the farmer, with sugar beet, wheat, and rice following in order. The Company employs 632 technicians regularly and 473 during busy season. It is noteworthy that land in the Kunduz area which in 1930 could be purchased at one Afghani per acre, now sells for 10,000 to 12,000 Afghanis per jereeb (nearly half acre) for farm land, while building sites sell for as much as 30,000 to 40,000 Afghanis per acre. Previously there was a saying about Kunduz, which had malarial climate: "Go to Kunduz if you seek death", now they say, "Go to Kunduz if you want gold".

**Oil Factory and Soap Factory :** Oil extracted from cotton seed is a by-product of the cotton industry. This is now used to make soap. The records show that in 1953, production was one million pounds of soap. In cotton growing areas many people press oil and make their own soap. One independent company in 1954 produced 350,000 cakes. It is assumed that the soap production of the cotton industry is but a small percentage of the total soap made and used in Afghanistan.

New oil and soap factories are being built, and new equipment is being purchased to replace the old ones now in use. The



new oil factory will have a capacity of extracting and processing 30 tons of raw oil and 24 tons of refined oil per day. It is estimated that 45,000 tons of raw cotton will yield 4,800 tons of oil, of which about 3,600 tons will be for food oil. The new soap factory will produce both yellow and fine toilet soap.

**Ceramics Plant :** A ceramic plant was started in 1940. It was enlarged in 1944. It has now four kilns, pebble mills, crushers, mixers, and potter-wheels. It produces, dishes, tiles (wall and floor) and plumbing equipment. At present the principal work is in tile production. The quality of the tile is said to be the best in Afghanistan.

Clay and talc required for ceramics are obtained from Ishkamish, south-east of Faizabad, and from an area south of Kunduz. The Cotton Company has contracted with Japanese technicians to assist in developing this industry.

**The Textile Industry :** The textile factories already in operation, and those in process of construction are as follow :

**Jabolus-Seradj :** The factory was constructed during the period 1934—1938, and contains 18,00 spindles, 80 handlooms and 56 power-looms. This plant uses 300,000 bales of cotton per year and has a capacity of 1,000,000 metres from its power-looms, and 350,000 metres of special weave textiles from its handlooms. All power-looms are used for production of plain white military cloth. Power is obtained from the local hydro-electric plant, and also from a small diesel engine. There is a serious lack of power during the winter months. The plant operates six days a week on two 10½ hour shifts each. It is planned that workers for other textile factories will be trained here.

**Puli-Khumri Plant :** This factory is 14 years old. It has 15,000 old spindles, and 15,000 spindles which are four years old

and 550 power looms. The plant has now a capacity of 16,000,000 metres of all white textiles. New equipment has been ordered, consisting of 15,000 spindles and 304 power looms. It is estimated that the new equipment will increase the total capacity of the factory to 26,000,000 metres a year.

The Company plans to send waste cotton to Gul Bahar for spinning, and to send extra white cloth to Gul Bahar for dyeing and printing. The company employs 2,400 workmen in the factory; 231 in the office, 67 in maintenance and seven German and Austrian instructors. The company owns its workers' houses, in which they live rent-free. It supplies them with clothing, meals and hospitalization.

**Gul Bahar Textile Mill :** The construction of this factory was begun in 1954. It is expected to be completed by the end of 1959. It is said to be one of the most modern plants in the world. All equipment is German-made and is of the latest design. It includes 47,000 spindles, 1,600 looms, besides 225 looms for white weaving. The factory includes a dye-house, printing plant, finishing plant and cotton storage space. The entire plant occupies 100,000 sq. metres of floor space. Its estimated capacity is 55,000,000 metres of cloth a year.

**Kabul :** A new plant has been constructed at Jangalak, near Kabul, by the Textile Co., which is intended primarily for its own use, but is expected to develop into a commercial enterprise for the Kabul area. This plant contains a Machine Shop, a Power House, a Furniture Factory, Metal & Wood-working School, Warehouse, Auto-repair Shops and a Hall.

All the buildings are of re-inforced concrete construction. It is anticipated that all the Company's vehicles and machinery will be repaired here, and all its furniture and wooden

equipment fabricated in the factory. Machinists and wood workers will be trained at the school, which has excellent equipment.

**Herat :** An independent industrial institute was established at Herat in May, 1955, now employing from 20 to 30 persons. The Institute has additional machinery on order, and with its arrival expects to increase the number of its employees by another 100 persons. The company buys cotton yarn from Puli-Khumri. It weaves socks and stockings at the rate of 100 pairs a day. It also makes T-shirts, cotton sweaters, vests, underwear and similar articles.

**Prison Textile Plant at Herat :** The textile plant in the prison has eight handlooms, and produces from 10,000 to 20,000 metres of cloth a year. Besides, it weaves about 20,000 pairs of socks annually. The plant spins its own yarn, and makes dyes for its own use.

The cotton and silk industries in the Herat area have about 100 silk looms, and 1,000 cotton looms. The silk looms are used commercially for the weaving of turban cloth, of which 6,400 pounds are produced each year. Besides, silk yarn to the amount of 6,400 pounds is exported annually.

Virtually all homes in northern districts raise, spin and weave their own cloth. Hand-gins are generally used. The "Kurk" cloth industry in Herat has about 800 looms, on which are woven blankets and woollen cloth of a very fine quality made from goats' and camels' down.

**Woollen Industry :** There are two woollen mills, one at Kabul and the other at Kandahar. The equipment in the Kabul factory consists of 30 electric looms and 50 handlooms. The factory uses about 600 tons of wool annually, and has capacity of producing 150,000 metres of 52-inch wide fabric.

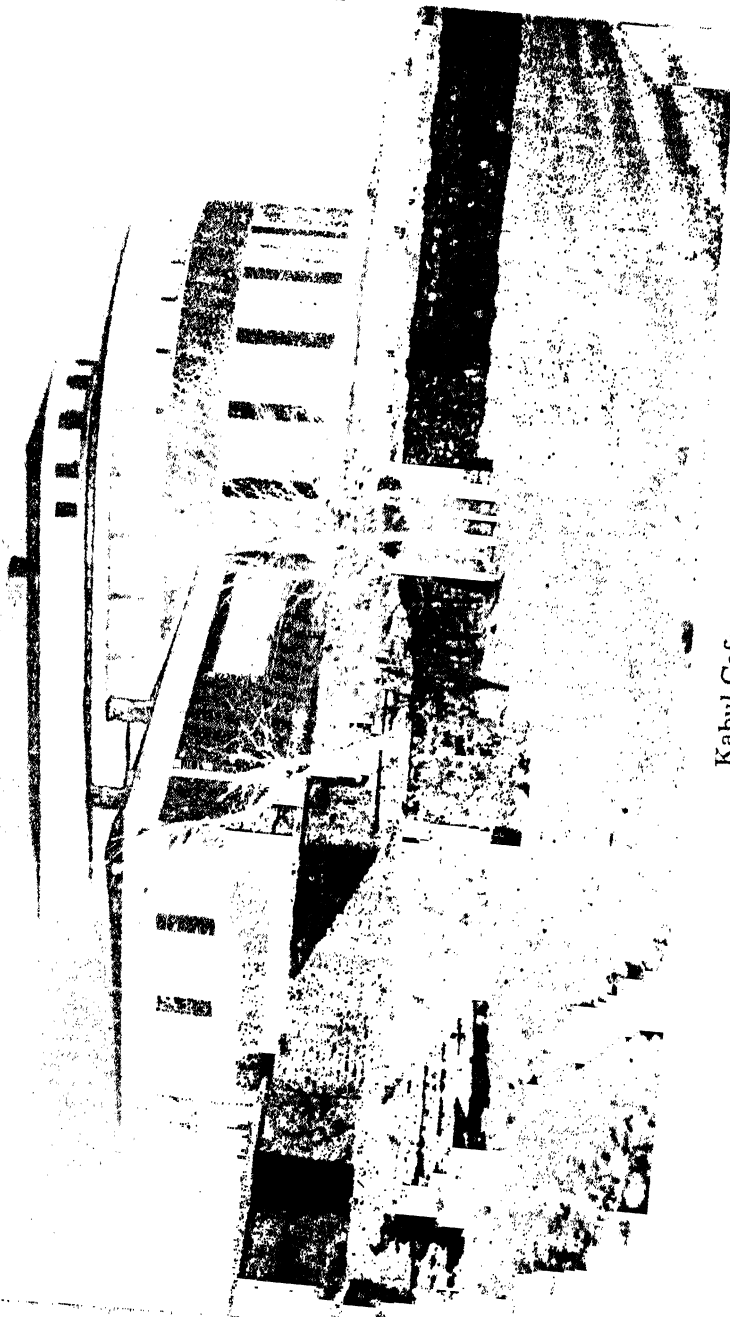
**Kandahar :** This factory has been operating since 1933. It has 2,160 spindles and 36 power looms. Its maximum capacity is 70,000 metres of blanket of 1.33 metres width and 35,000 metres of tweed ranging in width from 1.4 to 1.60 metres.

In addition to the two plants described above, there are numerous other sources of production. The Rug Factory in Herat produces about 500 metres of rugs every two years.

**Karakul Industry :** The Karakul producing territory extends from Aqchah in the north to Herat. In 1945, the production was 2,400,000 pieces ; at present it is about 2,000,000 pieces a year. It is estimated that independent producers and distributors handle about 1,300,000, while the Karakul Company handles about 700,000 skins. The Karakul Company has ten plants. The Mazari Sharif plant alone handles 400,000 skins, while the Andkhoy plant handles from 100,000 to 150,000 skins a year.

**Silk Industry :** There are great numbers of mulberry trees in Afghanistan. The silk industry was started in the Baghlan area with the assistance of a Japanese consultant. It is estimated that the farmers in this one area alone raise about 42 tons of cocoons, and use about 33 tons in home spinning, and sell about 10 tons annually to the Silk Company. The area where silk is produced extends from Jabalus-Seradj to the northern border and across to Andkhoy, then south to Herat.

**Sugar Industry:** There are two great sugar factories, one at Industrial Baghlan and the other at Jalalabad. Machinery for the first was purchased in 1938 from Skoda, a Czechoslovakian firm and installed in 1940 at a cost of 1,000,000 dollars. It has a maximum capacity of 60,000 tons of sugar beets. In 1954 it processed 41,000 tons of beet and it is estimated that



Kabul Cafe.



Maiwand Street, Kabul.

in 1959 it will be in a position to handle 60,000 tons. Sugar extracted is calculated at 13 per cent of the total tonnage. In 1954 the plant produced 5,300 metric tons of refined sugar, and 7,500 metric tons are planned for 1960. A second factory is also planned. When this starts working it is expected that Afghanistan will become self-sufficient in producing sugar for its own needs.

The factory now operates 60 days in November and December, after a six to seven-month growing season. Sugar beets provide a good growing crop for farmers. The farmer now raises about six tons per acre, but this can be doubled with the use of commercial fertilisers. Beet production in this area increased 42 per cent from 1952 to 1953. All waste from the plant is returned to the farmers for cattle feed free of cost. The usual farm in this area is about six acres in size, on which crops of sugar beets, cotton, wheat and fruits, including grapes, are usually grown. It is estimated that the average sale value of all the crops from such farms is about 15,000 Afghanis a year each farm.

The Sugar Factory at Industrial Baghlan is owned by individual stock-holders, the Afghan National Bank (Bank-i-Millie) owning 85 per cent of the stocks. The factory employs 60 to 65 office workers, 60 permanent labourers, and up to 1,000 temporary labourers during the season. The Sugar Company has its own farm with 500 cattle, 600 to 700 sheep, 100 horses, 20 camels and 20 mules.

**Jalalabad Sugar Factory:** This plant has a capacity of 350 to 500 tons of sugar annually.

**Petroleum:** There are a good many indications that considerable quantities of crude oil exist north of the Hindu-Kush,

from Taluqan to Maimanah. A Swedish Exploration Company has a contract for drilling near Saripul. Some also think that oil exists south of the Hindukush range too, especially in the south-west desert regions.

**Cement Factory :** A cement factory was completed at Jabalus-Seraj only recently. It has a 100 ton capacity a day, or 350,000 tons annually. Limestone, clay and iron ore are adjacent to the factory site. Only coal is to be trucked from Karkar or Ishpushta mines. The factory supplies cement to the local markets.

**Leather and Shoe Factory at Kabul :** This plant has a capacity to handle 600 hides a day. (The Leather Company imports colours and uses its own tanning mix). The capacity of the Shoe Factory is 500 pairs of military boots a day, plus 100 pairs of shoes for civilian use.

**The Slaughter House and Refrigeration Plant :** In 1954 the slaughter house handled 73,000 animals. All meat produced is for local consumption in or near Kabul. Sheep casings are exported and the fat of animals (fat from tails) is used for household cooking.

**The Marble Factory at Kabul :** The Factory has Italian made equipment, and uses 15 different kinds of marble, all from Afghanistan. Lack of transport facilities prevents extensive use of marble found in distant districts. The factory produces 8,000 sq. meters of finished products of marble a year. It also polishes and manufactures lapis-lazuli products.

**Cottage Industries :** Of the cottage industries, the first place is occupied by carpet-weaving. For hundreds of years Afghanistan has been famous for its fine carpets, which are highly valued in foreign markets for their beauty, durability,



and brilliancy of colours. The chief carpet-manufacturing districts are all situated in the north, from Herat to Kataghan. Mazari-Sharif, Daulatabad, Aqchah, Qarqeen; Andkhoy, Maimanah, Shibarghan, Shore-Tuppeh, Gulran and Herat are the chief centres of this industry, but the carpets manufactured at Daulatabad are of the best quality and are famous throughout the world. In addition to carpets and rugs, prayer rugs (called Jai-Namaz), saddle bags, pillow-cases, etc., are also made in carpet patterns.

These rich and far-famed carpets and rugs are the work of women's hands, women who have spent their lives, from earliest childhood, to motherhood and grandmotherhood, at the loom. A few stakes driven into the earthen floor, cross-beams, warp-rollers with the ground fabric of the carpet stretched on them, a knife, a comb, and a pair of scissors—these are the ancient and traditional apparatus upon which from time immemorial the girls of northern Afghanistan prepare for their homes the principal furnishings, the carpets of wool and silk, that decorate the walls and doorways, the rugs of the floor, the saddle-bags and tent-flaps.

The art of carpet weaving has survived to our own day, and it is still carried on by women, who still weave the designs that have been handed down from generation to generation. The loom used for the big carpets is the same used formerly, but the most perfect instruments of the execution of the work are the unerring eyes and the dexterous fingers that move to a swift rhythm with greater precision than those of a harpist.

The delicate fingers now rest on the threads of the ground-work, pick up a couple raised by a heddle, tie them in a complicated knot, the ends of which are pulled through to the right

side of the carpet. A flash of the knife and the ends are cut short. Knots after knots thus slip from under the nimble fingers till the ground work begins to glow with different colours—raspberry and wine reds, pinks and browns, relieved with white and black. The heddle raises some of the threads of the groundwork, and leaves the others, while both hands draw the strong elastic thread of the weft—the margin of the row.

Then the hands pick up the heavy comb of hard wood and, with a few smart blows along the last row of the weft, drive the knots close up to the one before. Twenty rows, up to eight thousand knots, are made in a day, but in a square metre of any carpet there are eight hundred thousand knots to be tied and thickened.

The close rows of varicoloured knots of uneven worsted steadily advance over the monotone of the background, and the pattern glimmers vaguely through the broken colours. But now the two small hands wield the great scissors, and the razor-keen blades crop the ragged ends of the knots to exactly three millimetres above the foundation. The harmonious design flashes into sudden brilliance of silken woollen pile.

When the busy fingers need a rest, the carpet-weavers turn to a cup of tea, which is quaffed from a small gay faience.

The wool of these carpets is dyed with the unfading colours obtained from the madder plant, cochineal, Sihchoba, etc., which last for centuries. It is interesting to note that old carpets fetch higher prices than the new ones, for the brilliancy of their colours, which is enhanced by constant use and rubbing.

Next to carpets, the making of sheepskin coats and vests is a flourishing industry. Usually the edges and sleeves of the coats are embroidered with yellow silk. Coats of other furs,

such as Karakul skins, wolf hides and the pelts of fox, and lynx, etc., are also very common in use, and a large number of these are exported.

These cottage industries of cotton and wool fabrics are widespread. In view of the cold climate and the existence of vast pasturage the inhabitants from a very early time took to the rearing of sheep which supply them with milk, butter, various other dairy products, as well as wool and skins. A considerable quantity of this wool is consumed locally by the handlooms and textile mills, while the remainder is exported.

## **Improvement of Sericulture In Afghanistan\***

Sericulture has been quite popular with Afghan farmers for many centuries despite the fact that only poor silkworm strains and primitive methods were used. In recent years some sericulture technicians from abroad were sent to the country by F. A. O. of the United Nations under the technical Assistance Programme. Beginning in 1953, modern techniques and good mulberry and worm varieties were introduced to this country where the climate and rural economical conditions proved favourable to this small industry.

The first place chosen for carrying on such work was the Province of Kataghan, because of these reasons :

- (1) Communications are comparatively better than the other silk centres,
- (2) Local political and economical leaders are mostly warm hearted, farsighted, and particularly interested in developing the silk industry,
- (3) Modern agricultural production mills and factories are centralised in that area and other scientific improvements in agriculture have already been initiated,
- (4) Necessary supply of houses, motor vehicles, electricity, materials, etc., can be easily provided.

A summary of four years' work with its preliminary results is as follows :

- (1) **Mulberry Plantations :**
  - (a) Made by the Silk Co-operative Co.—A model mulberry orchard was organized in March 1953 where 5,000 trees of best varieties were imported

\*Extract from a report submitted by Professor Kintson Keh, the Silk Specialist, to the Ministry of Agriculture.

from Japan and planted according to most up-to-date methods. The trees of this orchard have served as mother-trees from which thousands and thousands of scions were picked by the farmers who found the value of grafting them to their own seedlings. The company has augmented year after year the production of seedlings from a few thousands at start to hundreds of thousands.

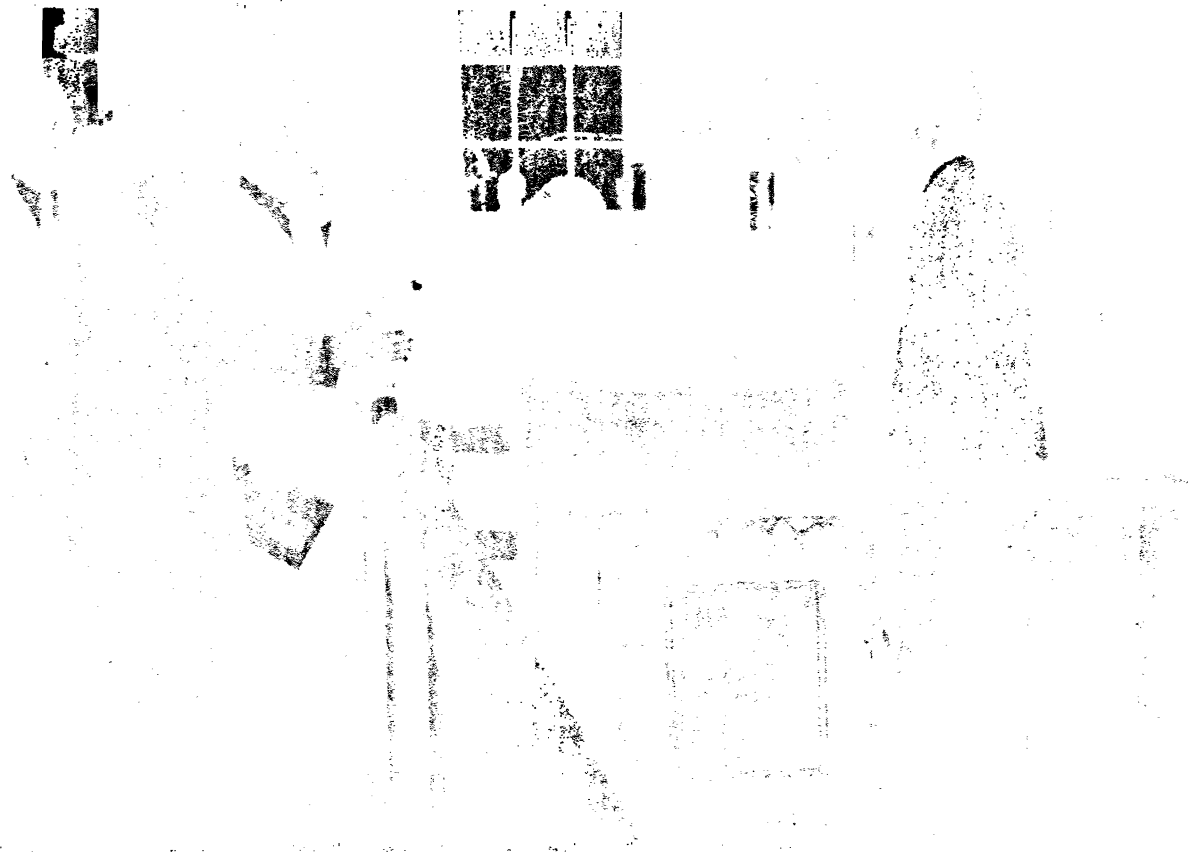
- (b) Made by the farmers.—Knowing the superiority of the improved trees in precocity and productivity, the Katghan farmers after their two-year observation, began to take action in sowing acres and acres of land with mulberry seeds in order to obtain large quantities of seedlings. More than two million mulberry seedlings can be seen on their land and more than fifty thousand grafts are reportedly grown now. As a matter of fact, the production of such grafts cannot be limited.
- (2) Selected silkworm eggs: A most important step to be taken for assuring farmers of cocoon harvests is to supply them with good and strong silkworm eggs. The company assisted by F. A. O. technicians has formed a breeding station through obtaining modern equipment, and training personnel for producing more and more disease-free and high-yield eggs to be distributed yearly and seasonly to the farmers. An approximate statistical table of egg production is as follows:
- |                |            |           |             |
|----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Year 1953..... | 6,000 grs. | 1956..... | 60,000 grs. |
| 1954.....      | 9,000 ,,   | 1957..... | 95,000 ,,   |
| 1955.....      | 36,000 ,,  |           |             |

In order to refund the expenditures of the company, the farmers are willing to pay back five Afghanis per gr. of eggs.

Investigations have proved that on the average, farmers of Kataghan obtained in 1956, fifty pounds of fresh cocoons per box of twelve gr. eggs, and the value of each pound was twelve Afghanis. In other words, they could obtain 600 Afs. per box or 10 times the egg cost. The silk yield was so high that those who turned cocoons into silk, could still make 35% more on their cocoon price.

These facts have shown the progress of modern sericulture to be very rapid indeed. It is estimated that after two or three years, the quantity of cocoons produced cannot be absorbed by the local reelers of coarse silk. A surplus of raw material would mean an unreasonable decline of the cocoon price. This matter has again been studied by FAO technicians as to how to install the first modern silk filature where proper standardized silk can be processed for home use as well as for export to the world market. Though the competition of man-made fibers is keen today, there is plenty of room for natural silk abroad provided the price is not too high and its quality good. Precisely, Afghan silk possesses very good natural qualities and its price can be the cheapest in the world provided every technique concerned can be managed scientifically.

Recently, an eminent silk expert from the leading Silk Corporation of Japan came to this country and made a careful survey of Afghan sericulture. He



**His Majesty the King inspects products of the Fine Arts School on Independence Day Celebrations.**





declared that he could hardly believe that, in such a short time, Afghanistan had made such improvement in mulberry leaves and in cocoons and he was of the opinion that a bright future lies ahead for this industry in Afghanistan. A meeting was held between him and Dr. Yussef, Minister of Mines and Industries, in connection with setting up a mechanical, modern filature in Baghlan. A preliminary agreement has been reached and co-operation between the two countries in silk processing may be expected in the future.

### **Afghanistan's Foreign Trade**

Although Afghanistan was once an important corridor for commercial traffic between the Occident and the Orient, little trade passes through the country today. As a result, Afghanistan is unable to supplement its export income through bank commissions, transportation charges, or middlemen profits. In addition, imports are subject to long delays, expensive transportation costs, and handling charges. Foreign trade, never-the-less plays an important part in the economic life of Afghanistan, and has been a major factor in the country's economic development.

Afghanistan at present has no outlet to the sea ; her foreign trade, therefore, passes through the neighbouring countries.

The tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan especially during 1953 to 1957 greatly affected the volume of Afghan trade through Pakistan. Due to this, a large amount of Afghan trade passed through the Soviet Union.

Afghanistan is almost completely a supplier of raw materials and a market for consumer and developmental goods. Its most important export commodities are hides and skins, principally Karakuli skins ; the figure reaching 2,000,000 skins a year. Next to skins and fur, the chief exports of the country are : fruits (fresh, dried and preserved), and nuts (almonds, pistachios, pignolia, etc.). Of late, cotton has occupied a prominent part in Afghan exports. It has been reported that annual exports during 1954 of Karakuli skins averaged approximately one and a half million pieces ; ginned cotton about 9,000 tons ; raw wool about 5,500 tons, and fruits and nuts about 80,000 tons. It has been estimated that currently from one-half to three-quarters of all raw wool and cotton exports go to the Soviet Union ; almost all of the fruits, nuts and vegetables, to India

and Pakistan, and the largest part of Karakuli exports to the United States. Before World War II, the United Kingdom had been the chief market for Afghan Karakuli.

•Afghanistan's most important needs consist of textile machinery and motor vehicles, building materials, sugar, tea, petroleum products, and boots and shoes, with cotton piece goods representing the largest single item—about 40% of her imports.

Before World War II, India, the United Kingdom, USSR, and the United States were, in that order, Afghanistan's leading markets; while India, the United Kingdom, the USSR, Japan, Germany, and the United States were its principal suppliers. The direction of Afghanistan's trade changed with the war, and the United States became Afghanistan's most important market, followed by India, the USSR, and the United Kingdom. Its leading suppliers remained the same, except that the share of the United States became more important as a result of the cessation of Afghan imports from Japan and Germany. It has been estimated that in 1954-55 the USSR assumed first place in Afghanistan's trade, both as a market and as supplier. Chief imports from this direction are: petroleum products, cement, cotton piecegoods, sugar and trucks.

**Afghanistan's Foreign Trade, in the years 1951-1954.**  
In million of dollars. (Figures for Afghan trade with USSR, and the Soviet-bloc countries are not available):

| Year | Exports | Imports | Favourable Balance<br>of Trade |
|------|---------|---------|--------------------------------|
| 1951 | 42      | 21      | 21                             |
| 1952 | 53      | 23      | 12                             |
| 1953 | 39      | 25      | 14                             |
| 1954 | 39      | 25      | 14                             |

## EXPORTS

| Comodity &<br>Country                                             | Quantity | Value<br>in thousands of dollars |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Raw cotton</b> (in thousands<br>of pounds)                     | 15,448   | 5,878                            |
| Japan ...                                                         | 9,506    | 3,751                            |
| Germany ...                                                       | 5,371    | 1,926                            |
| Hongkong ...                                                      | 571      | 201                              |
| <b>Raw wool</b>                                                   |          |                                  |
| U. S. A. ...                                                      | 2,709    | 2,508                            |
| India ...                                                         | 159      | 38                               |
| <b>Hides &amp; Skins</b> (principally<br>Karakul), (in thousands) |          | 14,076                           |
| U. S. A.                                                          | 1,215    | 11,124                           |
| United Kingdom                                                    | ...      | 1,000                            |
| Germany                                                           | ...      | 1,444                            |
| India                                                             | 635      | 499                              |
| Canada                                                            | ...      | 9                                |
| <b>Fruits, nuts and vegetable</b><br>(in thousands of pounds)     |          | 11,203                           |
| India                                                             | ...      | 8,058 (1)                        |
| Pakistan                                                          | ...      | 2,867 (2)                        |
| United States                                                     | 582      | 278                              |
| <b>Asafoetida</b> (in 100 Lbs.)                                   |          |                                  |
| India                                                             | 592      | 225                              |
| <b>Seeds, all kinds</b>                                           | ...      | 208                              |
| India                                                             | 122      | 198                              |
| Pakistan                                                          | 36       | 10                               |
| <b>Wood &amp; timber</b>                                          |          |                                  |
| Pakistan (January—November only)                                  |          | 983                              |
| <b>Other drugs</b>                                                |          | 55                               |

(1) Includes dried fruit valued at 4,539,000 dollars.

(2) January—November only.

## IMPORTS

| Commodity &<br>Country                                | Quantity | Value<br>in thousands of<br>dollars |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Cotton piecegoods</b> (1,000<br>yards)             | 31,365   | 5,285                               |
| India                                                 | 23,195   | 3,772                               |
| Japan                                                 | 8,170    | 1,521                               |
| <b>Artificial silk piecegoods</b><br>(in 1,000 yards) | 24,403   | 4,029                               |
| Japan                                                 | 24,318   | 4,001                               |
| India                                                 | 85       | 28                                  |
| <b>Tea</b> (1,000 Lbs.)                               | 4,785    | 3,126                               |
| India                                                 | 2,946    | 2,130                               |
| Pakistan                                              | 1,372    | 829                                 |
| Japan                                                 | 467      | 167                                 |
| <b>Vehicles &amp; parts</b> (number)                  |          |                                     |
| U. S. A.                                              | 945      | 2,584                               |
| <b>Machinery</b>                                      |          |                                     |
| U. S. A.                                              |          | 278                                 |
| <b>Leather</b>                                        |          |                                     |
| India                                                 |          | 220                                 |
| <b>Chinaware &amp; Porcelainware</b>                  |          | 139                                 |
| • Spices                                              |          |                                     |
| India (1,000 Lbs.)                                    | 192      | 54                                  |
| <b>Boots &amp; shoes</b> (1,000 pairs)                |          |                                     |
| India                                                 | 93       | 38                                  |
| <b>Apparel</b>                                        |          |                                     |
| India                                                 |          | 28                                  |
| <b>Soap</b>                                           |          |                                     |
| India (100 Lbs.)                                      | 46       | 12                                  |

## MAJOR PROVINCES

**KABUL :** This province occupies the central plateau, and is for the most part mountainous, lying between 5,000 to 6,000 feet above sea-level. Its chief districts are : Koh Daman or Samt-i-Shamali, Lohgar, Verdak, Ghorband,\* Hazarajat, Bamian, Kabul Proper, Panjsher, Tagab and Nijrab.

Of these, Koh Daman (Capisia) is the most beautiful of all. It lies north of Kabul, from which it is separated by a low creeping ridge not far from the town. At the upper extremity of this valley rise the snowy peaks of the Hindukush, while those of the Paghman range overlook it from the west. To the east it is bounded by a lower range crossing the bottom of the valley. So enclosed, Koh Daman has a length of 40 miles and a medium breadth of 10 miles. The western side of the valley is much higher than the eastern, along which the drainage of the opposite mountain flows. The sides of the Paghman mountains are split by numerous ravines, down which come tumbling rills of the clearest and purest water. The slopes of these rugged channels are thickly planted with mulberry, and every suitable spot is clad with fruit trees or vines.

Koh Daman (the Skirts of Hills) is indeed one of the gardens of Afghanistan. There, one may wander in spring amidst the curves and folds of an undulating land, neither hill nor plain, with the scent of the flowering-willow and sinjit in the air, and the darkness of a spring growth of flower and grass bordering narrow runlets and irrigation channels, a blue sky above, and a varied carpet beneath, while the song of the merry labourer rises from the field and orchards. Piled up on steep and unbroken banks

\*Recently a new Province named "Parwan" has been created which includes the districts of Charikar, Jabalu-Seradj and Ghorband.

from the very foot of the mountains are scattered white-walled villages, and it is there that one may find later in the same year some of the fruits for which the country has acquired a world-wide fame.

In November a gentle haze rests in soft indecision upon the dust-coloured landscape—heavier and bluer over the low-lying fields, from which all vegetation has been lifted. It is a different world now from the world of the spring—all utterly sad and dust-laden, but it is then that the strings of fruit-laden donkeys and trucks make their way towards the city, where the shops are seen piled up from floor to the roof with these delicious fruits.

Besides fruits, Koh Daman yields grains, cotton, tobacco and various kinds of vegetables. It is thickly studded with castles and decorated with gardens and vineyards. This delightful district, full of clustering hamlets, has an invigorating climate. Few districts possess a town that can rival Istaliff perched at the foot of the Paghman range. A small river runs through this beautiful hamlet, and on either side of it are gardens, green, gay, and surpassingly lovely, where

“A million and million flowers  
The fields and gardens adorn,  
And the purple iris scents the air,  
As each fresh bloom is born”.

Its water, even in the months of June and July, is so cold that there is no need of icing it. The Takhat (Throne), where people flock in hundreds on every holiday, is one of the finest beauty spots of Koh Daman. Its magnificent spreading poplars (Panja Chinar) as they are called here, perhaps survivors of Mughal days, throw broad shade on all sides, where a few hours'

rest makes the jaded visitor from the parched plains of the neighbouring countries forget his fatigue.

Opposite to the Takht stands the town of Istaliff; houses piled upon one another, resembling a beehive from afar, and stretching to the shoulder of the mountain that overlooks it. A stream pursues its way in the bottom of the valley below Takht, which chafed and torn by its rocky bed, produces a sweet, melodious sound that lulls the weary traveller to sleep even in the day time.

Some of the best grapes in the world come from Koh Daman. It also furnishes much of the annual crop of excellent raisins that Afghanistan produces—raisins which are dried in the perforated rooms that one sees in most of the villages along the road. Some of the villages have a unique method of preserving grapes fresh for use in winter. Choice bunches are encased in hollow mud cells, called Kangina, where in the high dry air, they keep without much loss of moisture and but little spoiling.

**GUL BAHAR :** (Spring Blossom). In the north-eastern corner of Koh Daman is another lovely spot, called Gul Bahar, which lies on the banks of the Panjsher river, where

“The wine-like air calls visitors forth ;  
Some wander far, some near ;  
To shoot, to fish, make pictures or  
To picnic by some mere”.

Looking upward from Gul Bahar towards the lofty Hindukush, a snaky line of intermingled white and green water is seen leaping and twisting among the huge stones that pave its narrow bed. So beautifully transparent is the water that the stones at the bottom can be easily counted. Another stream of cold water, breaking through the Hindukush, comes down with





Atan, a national dance.



...a soldier

headlong fury, tumbling and foaming to join the Panjsher at Gul Bahar. This is called the Shuttul, which affects a junction with the Panjsher a little below the iron bridge. This site has been selected for the construction of a textile mill. Beyond Gul Bahar lies the beautiful valley of Kôhistan.

The mountains at the head of Koh Daman throw out innumerable streams, foremost among which are : the Ghorband, the Parwan, the Shuttul, and the Panjsher. The Parwan flows into the Ghorband, about four miles below the hills. The Ghorband, thus augmented, joins the Panjsher at Ali Burj, on the north-east of the historic plain of Bagram. A few miles east of this junction the Barikab falls in from the south, and the drainage of the valley, thus collected into one channel, flows through an opening in the eastern hills and joins the Kabul at Sarobi, where a new electric plant is being installed to utilize the waters of these streams.

Koh Doman plays an important rôle in the ancient history of the country. It was a great seat of culture in the pre-Islamic days, and had some flourishing towns (such as Alexandria ad Caucasum, Houpian, Cartana, Cadrusi, and Capisia). The whole plain, especially that of the Bagram (old Capisene) is littered with the ruins of these ancient seats of culture.

• Another of the better known of the many populous valleys in this direction is called Panjsher (Five Lions), which lies beyond the pale of Koh Daman and Kohistan. A zigzag motor road now leads from Gul Bahar to this happy valley. The soil of Panjsher is not very rich and is divided into small patches, but its climate is very salubrious, and its water is said to help digestion. Orchards and mulberry groves constitute most of the wealth of the people inhabiting this valley. A caravan road

from Kabul to Kataghan passes through this valley enroute to the famous Khawak Pass, at a height of 11,640 feet above sea-level.

Among other places of interest around Kabul, as regards climate and natural beauty, mention may be made of Paghman, which is picturesquely set up in the lap of the range of the same name, some 16 miles west of the capital. It is a small, picturesque town, and the whole locality is exceptionally clean, healthy, calm and serene.

The climate of the Province of Kabul, on the whole, is wholesome and bracing. The air, owing to altitude, is rare and at first, a new-comer experiences some little difficulty in breathing when walking uphill. There is usually little rainfall during the summer. Thunderstorms, with heavy downfalls of rain are frequent during early spring. In these storms, the flashes of lightning are almost continuous and the peals of thunder are deafening and without cessation, but the electricity is often expended on the heights of the mountains, and there are few cases on record of a house being struck.

In winter, heavy falls of snow are common, and when the wind causes it to drift, the small houses and hamlets are sometimes half covered with snow. Electric as well as telephone service is interrupted and motoring becomes impossible except for cars equipped with chains. The temperature sometimes, especially during cold waves, falls to 30° below zero C. At Hazarajat the winter is even more severe, and traditions tell of disastrous snowstorms. Avalanches are also very common causing great damage to life and property.

But even during winter the days are mostly bright and cheerful, and the sky clears soon after the fall of snow. The sun

shines brilliantly causing the snow to thaw. In the evening it freezes again, and the roads are like polished glass, very slippery, and men, horses and camels are apt to fall and be injured. This is the time for village children to skip over the sheets of ice, using nailed shoes instead of skates.

The sun shining on the snow causes a good deal of snow-blindness, if care is not taken, but the most trying time is when the sky is overcast, and a great wind rises, which nothing can keep out of the houses. Then at sun-down the temperature falls below zero and continues to fall as the night advances, and even with a huge fire burning in the middle of the room, one is warm only on the side nearest the fire while the other side continues to be chilled with the continuous draught which comes in through every crevice as the wind surges against the house in heavy waves. Those outside, who bear the brunt of this wind, suffer considerably, and often lose feet, hands or nose with frost-bite. At this time wolves, too, driven by hunger, come down from their natural fastnesses to seek food, and are sometimes so desperate that they attack and kill men, when they find them helpless with cold or fatigue, and carry off children, sheep and goats, when and where they can get them.

The clear rare air makes distances very deceptive to the eyes, and mountains at a considerable distance appear very close. Days of bright, clear sunshine are very tiring owing to the crisp biting air, when the thermometer runs down to double figures below zero, and the scintillations of light reflected from the myriad particles of frozen moisture sparkle like drops from a lamp-lit fountain, which greatly affect the naked eye.

Earthquakes are common in the Kabul district, but thanks to the mode of construction of the houses, which are built in

such a way as to be earthquake proof, the damage caused is often negligible.

**KANDAHAR :** Kandahar is one of the richest provinces of Afghanistan, and is extremely fertile and well-watered. It can boast of rich meadows, clothed with green turf, of gardens and orchards full of fruit trees and fields of corn, watered by numerous running streams. Its climate is cheering in winter, but it is considered most pleasant in spring. During summer it is both hot and dry. Its chief exports are fruits, fresh as well as dried, and large quantities of wool. The wool of Kandahar is of a very good quality, and in the last few years it has found an excellent market abroad. A factory for the manufacture of woollen cloth, was set up here before the outbreak of the last World War, and since then it has made considerable progress. Its produce, both good and cheap, is now supplying the needs of the people, replacing imports from abroad of woollen goods.

However, Kandahar's real fame lies in its delicious fruits. Foremost among these are grapes. Then come pomegranates and 'shakar-para' (a kind of dried apricot, so sweet, that it is named 'shakar-para', meaning a piece of sugar), which is dried and exported in large quantities. Kandahar has a fine quality of raisin, of light yellow colour, up to two centimetres long, known by the name of 'Abjosh' (water-boiled).

The pomegranates grown in this district are of exceptionally high quality and in size reach from 17 to 18 cms. in diameter each. Large groves of pomegranate trees are located along the Arghandab river. The pulp of the fruit is usually dark-red less frequently white.

The construction of the Kajaki and Arghandab Dams and the Boghra Canal in collaboration with the U.S. Operations

Mission are likely to play an important rôle in the agricultural development of this province. These developments will progressively result in an increase in the productive capacity of Afghan agriculture of over 700,000 acres of improved and new land. At the same time, the project will make a major contribution to the solution of the problem of the settlement of Afghanistan's tribal nomads.

**HERAT:** The province of Herat occupies the north-western corner of Afghanistan. A traveller is struck with the richness and fertility of its soil. It is well-watered by innumerable streams, the Hari-Rud being the most important of them. Well-fortified and populous villages are scattered throughout this valley. Around these are beautiful gardens, orchards and vineyards.

The north-eastern parts of this province are mostly mountainous, while the western and southern portions are generally sandy and level. The Parapomisis, running roughly parallel to the Hari-Rud, cuts off the valley of the Hari from that of Badghisat. The north-western corner of the province is occupied by innumerable saline deserts, known by the common name of Namaksar (salt-deserts). These deserts are regarded by some as the beds of dried-up seas.

The main valley of Hert, watered by the Hari-Rud, is extremely fertile and well-watered, and is one of the richest and best irrigated districts of the country, wherein are situated the important towns of Herat, Obek, Ghorian (Poshinj of old) and Kushan.

The lovely district of Badghisat, so famous in history, lies on the northern skirts of the Paropamisus Range. It is said that Nassr bin Ahmad, the Samanid King of Bokhara (913—942

A.D.) was so charmed with its beauty that he would not quit the place even after a stay of two years. The courtiers, home-sick as they were, approached Rodaki, the poet-laureate, if he would do something to make the King return home. Whereupon the poet composed a few simple but touching verses, and when he recited them to the King, the effect was marvellous. It is said that he immediately left on horse-back for Bokhara without even waiting to put on his boots.

Sabzwar or Sheendand, the old historic Isfazar another fertile district, lies to the south on the Herat-Kabul road.

The soil of Herat is varied in its quality and character. Some districts are so fertile that grain there yields one hundred and rice two hundred-fold.

The produce of Herat consists of fruits in great variety and most kinds of grain. It also produces some silk, saffron, large quantities of asafoetida, manna, tobacco, pistachio, nuts and gums.

Herat possesses a pleasant and beautiful climate. Winters are not extremely cold, and summers would be hot but for the periodical wind from the west which generally lasts for 120 days.

The mineral wealth of the province is said to be great. There are many signs of oil-bearing areas. Important oil fields are located at a place called Tirlpul, west of the city on Herat-Meshed road. Salt is found in various parts in the shape of a thick effervescence. The province is also rich in iron and coal.

Herat is celebrated for the beauty and durability of its carpets. It is also noted for its woollen cloth (called Kurk) and silken fabrics called Kanavez.



The rich agricultural products and manufactured goods of the province enable Herat to carry on commerce with foreign countries on a large scale. Its chief exports are : silk, asafoetida, wool, woollen and silken goods, cumin seeds, fresh and dried fruits, shawls, carpets, tobacco, skins, and some medicinal plants and drugs.

Herat occupies a prominent place in the history of Afghanistan. It was a great seat of learning and arts during the Timuride Period (15th and 16th centuries). Structural remains scattered over the face of the country still remind people of its past grandeur.

To the east of Herat lies Ghor, the seat of the Ghorid kings. The country round Ghor is almost Himalayan in general characteristics and beauty, with delightful valleys and open spaces, terraced fields, well-built two-storeyed wooden houses, pretty villages, orchards with an abundance of walnuts and vines trailing over trees. The picturesque characteristics of Ghor extend to Zamindawar, on its southern frontier.

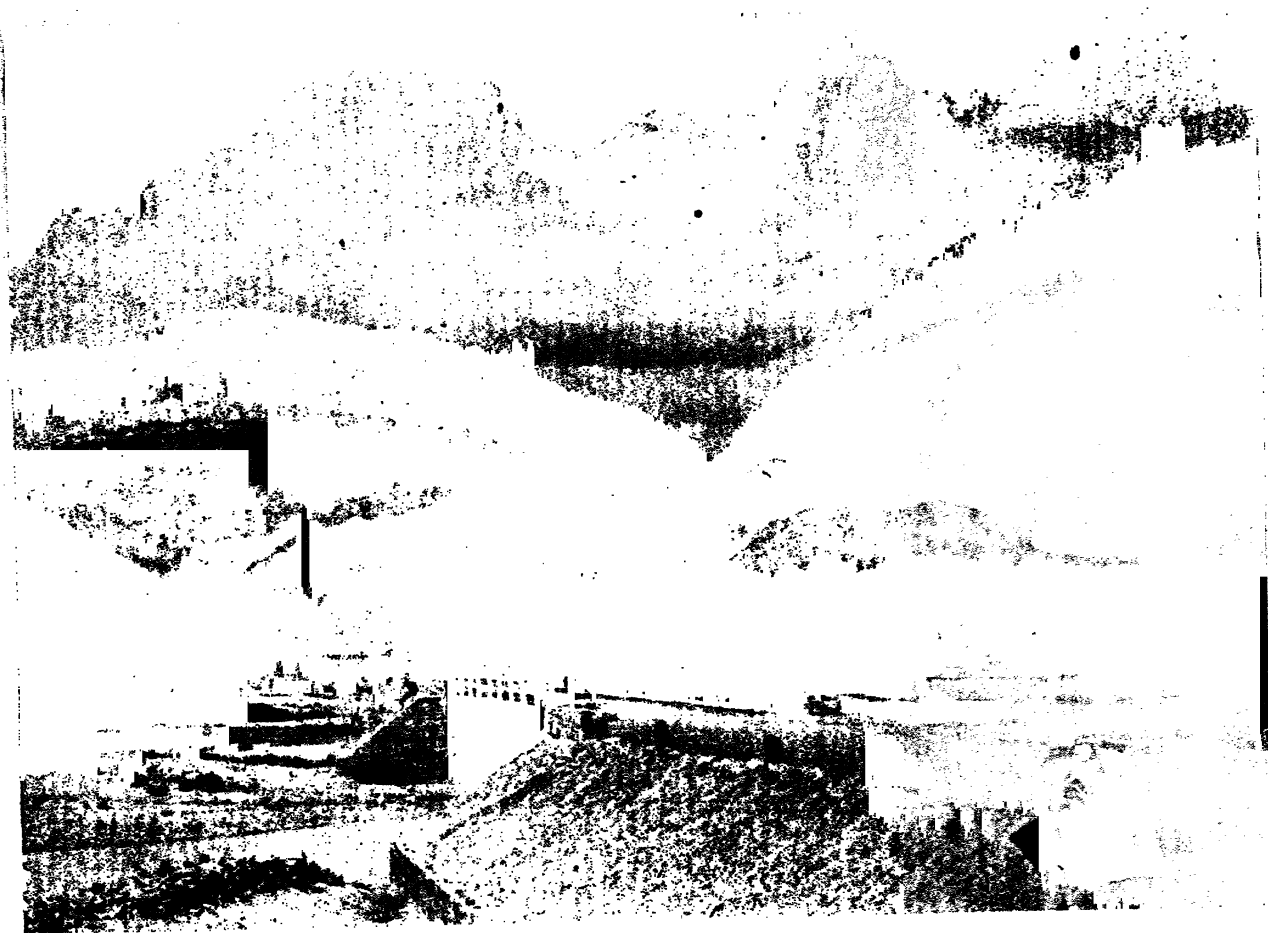
**MAZAR-I-SHARIF :** This province consists of a vast plain which reaches the Amu (Oxus) in the north, and to the south it is confined by the great ranges of the Tirband-i-Turkestan and Koh-i-Baba. The climate of the plain is hot in summer and is marked by deficient rainfall. A considerable part of this district forms a sandy desert where vegetation is confined to a few prickly plants. Duststorms are common, and sand is encroaching on districts where cultivation was formerly possible.

This Bactrian plain is a prairie in the greenness of spring and early summer, when the breezy hills lie knee-deep in grass and flowers—flowers of all descriptions, but consisting chiefly of scarlet tulips and gorgeous purple thistles. They are replaced

later by poppies as scarlet as tulips ; and yet more thistles. This lasts but for a very short time. When the spring rains cease, all this gaiety ceases too. The flowers wither and the stalks dry up and stiffen. Then comes the wind, and it scrapes all the dry stalks from the surface of the downs. It blows them away, and then rolls them up into huge bundles which collect in the folds and gullies of the hills—a tangled mass of dry nothingness. When the snow descends and the floods finally come again, out goes all the mass of debris, sailing after the manner of detached haystacks. None of it ever reaches the Oxus, for none of the local streams ever makes a junction with that river. So the rubbish gets piled into swamps, and this gives cover to countless pheasants, and finally becomes submerged and reed-covered.

The province of Mazar (ancient Bactria) has a glorious past. It was here that the Aryan settlers laid the foundation of what is known to be their first capital—Bakhdi, the city of lofty banners. Arts and crafts developed very early in this region and reached a high level. It was here that Zoroaster preached his simple religion, and the Zend-Avesta came into being. Later on it became the centre of the Greek colony in the East. In the palmy Buddhist days, Balkh became a great seat of religion, and was famous for its temple of Navavihara, more familiarly known as Atishkada-i-Naobahar (the fire-temple of Naobahar).

As a province Mazar-i-Sharif is ranked among the leading ones in the state. Its position is in no way less important than that of Herat or Kandahar. It contains the fertile districts of Tashquerghan, Aibak, Sangcharak, Saripul, Balkh, Daulatabad, Aqchah, and Shibarghan. It has innumerable pastures where flocks of sheep and horses are reared. It is also the home of the famous Afghan sheep, Karakuli. The chief items of exports are : the Karakuli lambskins, carpets, pistachio and almonds.



A view of Doab-i-Mekh-i-Zarin (of the Golden Peg), Shikari Pass



**KATAGHAN :** It occupies the north-eastern corner of the country, and is bounded on the south by the Hindukush and on the north by Badakhshan and Amu. It is well-watered on the whole and possesses some fine populous districts, foremost among these being: Baghlan, Puli-Khumri, Doshi; Dahan-i-Ghori, Khanabad, Andarab, Kunduz, Hazrat-i-Imam and Taluqan. It is the chief cotton producing centre of the country; part of which is used by the Puli-Khumri and Jabalus-Seradj Mills, while large quantities are left to be exported.

The province of Kataghan (Tukharistan of old) is also noted for its fine breed of horses and sheep. Within the last few years a large number of canals have been dug out in the province, which now play a great part in the agricultural development of the country. Similarly large areas of marshy and swampy lands have been drained and brought under cultivation. Previously Kunduz (Kohan-Dizh, that is Old Fort) was notorious for its malarial climate to the extent that people used to say: "Marg mekhwahi Kunduz bro" (meaning "If it is death that you seek, then go to Kunduz"). However, the locality has now been properly drained and cleared of reeds and marshes and has come to be one of the most fertile districts of the province. The proverb now runs: "Go to Kunduz if you are after gold" (Zar mekhwahi Kunduz bro).

On the whole the climate of this province cannot be pronounced salubrious. Winters are comparatively better, but summers are hot and tiring.

Recently the cultivation of beetroot has made considerable progress, especially in the country around Baghlan, where a big sugar-mill is installed to make use of the produce.

**NANGRAHAR (SAMT-I-MASHRIQI or THE EASTERN PROVINCE):** There are few spots such as Jalalabad—a green,

pleasant valley where the Kabul river spreads out a hundred yards or more into a broad rapid stream and transforms sandy tracts into oases. There are poplar, cypress, mulberry, ash, and willow trees in Jalalabad, and their shade seem doubly deep because of the brilliance of the sun on the bare rocks and hills to the north and south.

Jalalabad is hot in summer, but its winters are quite pleasant. At the foot of the Speen Ghar there are some fine hill-stations, where people flock during the hot season. Kaja, Khogyani, and Mamakhel may be especially mentioned in this connection.

One of the richest districts of this province is Laghman (Lampaka of old). This fertile valley lies to the west of Jalalabad city along the Kabul-Peshawar road. The Kabul river, that has all along struggled through narrow gorges, here becomes a broad clear stream, more than 50 yards wide.

The valley of Laghman is well-watered and must have always been populous. From the north the snow-capped peaks of the Nuristan mountains (southern off-shoots of the Hindukush) look down upon it, and among the forest clad valleys at the foot of these peaks two important river systems take their rise—the Alishang and Alingar, which, uniting, join the Kabul river in this flat plain, where each acre of land is extremely productive.

The second valley of note is that of Kunar, which lies to the north of Jalalabad, and beyond which is situated the most fascinating region of Afghanistan, known as Nuristan (the old Kafiristan).

The Kunar valley is of exceptional interest for many reasons. The ancient road from Kabul (or Capisia) to India

through the Laghman valley ran across it in Bajaur. Consequently former conquerors, such as Alexander the Great and Babar, who advanced from Kabul, and were always concerned in reducing the hill tribes about the Kunar before they entered the plains of India, knew it well.

The Kunar valley is among the most lovely of the many lovely valleys of Afghanistan. Flanked by the snow-covered mountains of Khushmund on the west, and the long level watershed which divides it from Bajaur and Panjkora drainage on the east, it appears as one enters it from Jalalabad side, to be hemmed in and to be very narrow, But it widens out northward, a few miles above the entrance, where the ridges of the lofty Khushmund tail off into low altitudes of sweeping hills.

The Lower Kunar (or Kooz Kunar) in the early autumn is passing beautiful. Down the tawny plain, backed by purple hills, the river Kunar winds its way, reflecting the azure sky with pure turquoise, blinking and winking with tiny sun-shifts, and running emerald green at the edges, and sharp perpendicular columns of black break the landscape in ordered groups. There are the cypresses which still adorn, in stately rows, the archaic gardens of hamlets which once were flourishing towns. The clustering villages are thick in some parts, so thick that they jostle each other continuously. The villages are white-walled and outwardly clean. The scent of orange-blossoms is luscious and overpowering. It was through these lovely villages that Alexander the Great marched on his way to India (327 B.C.). Perhaps he crossed the Kunar watershed by the Speensuka Pass, which leads direct from Pasht to Bajaur. It was here that the bold invader met the stubborn resistance of the Aspasians or Assakenians (perhaps modern Safis) and was severely wounded.

Higher up the river the valley closes long before Chitral is reached. It narrows exceedingly. Here the northern winds rage down the funnel with bitter fury and make life burdensome. The villages take to the hill slopes or cluster in patches on the terraces at the feet of the hills.

To the south-west of the great gorges that come down from the Pamirs lies the most fascinating region of Nuristan (old name Kafiristan, that is the Land of the Unbelievers). Until 1892 a popular legend and belief peopled this region with the descendants of Alexander's army-men whom he had left behind. In that year, George Robertson entered the country twice, on the latter occasion making a prolonged stay, visiting several of the valleys and staying at the villages. He made close study of their languages, manners and customs. His report for the first time dispelled the idea that the inhabitants of this part of the country had any Macedonian origin. It is also related that when the Macedonian army was passing that way, somewhere among these hills, probably at the lower spurs of the three-peaked Koh-i-Noor, there dwelt a people who told the invaders that they were the descendants of the western people who had come into those parts with their god Dionysus. Nuristan has created much interest in various foreign countries, several missions (from Germany and Denmark) having visited it quite recently.

The valleys of Nuristan strike the traveller with their neatness, their beauty and well-cultivated fields. Near the houses are planted trees, laid out paths, and carefully conducted waterways, by which the antiquity of sedentary culture is felt. The crops are sown in small patches. Every foot of land is cultivated. The fields are surrounded by fences.



From Parun Pass onwards lies the forest zone. Here most of the houses are built of wood, with stones only in the foundation. The population, Nuristanis as they are called, are of pure Aryan type, tall, slim, and extremely handsome. They embraced Islam towards the close of the nineteenth century during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan.

PACTIA (SAMT-I-JUNUBI or the Southern Province). It lies south of Kabul, and occupies comparatively a smaller area. This region is mostly hilly and is covered with fine cedar forests. From an agricultural point this province is not rich and is very sparsely populated, but its chief importance lies in its strategical position, for here roads radiate to Kabul, Ghazni and Bannu. The province is the home of some of the most warlike and brave Afghan tribes, who have played an important rôle in the defence of the country.

Some of the forest districts are indeed very lovely and possess a healthful climate. The hilly districts are extremely cold in winter, but summers are generally genial. Khost is the hottest part of this region.

Gardez, the chief town of the province, stands at an elevation of 7,200 feet, and is colder than Kabul. During summer it is much cooler and has genial climate.

Chief items of export are : timber, charcoal, honey and pignolia.

## PART TWO

## The People

Afghans are for the most part of original Indo-European stock, though people of other races, especially Mongolians, are not wanting. The Pashtuns, who account for 65 or 70 per cent of the total population, are of Aryan origin. Next comes the Tajiks, who, like the Pashtuns, are the descendants of the original Aryan stock, settled in the country during the days of general migration. They form from 15 to 20% of the entire population. The rest are Hazaras, Turkomans, Uzbeks, Kizilbashs, Kirghiz, Arabs and others. Despite the medley of races and tongues, the Afghans today form one nation, and are united to live and die in the defence of their motherland.

Unfortunately, much misconception prevails about the manners and customs of the Afghans in the outside world. This is chiefly due to the fact that most of the books available are written by those who were hostile towards Afghanistan. A well-known American writer (Justice William O. Douglas) who recently had an opportunity to pay a visit to the country, and had been under the influence of these writers, says in this connection: "I had gone to Afghanistan with great misgivings. The literature I had read, the tales I had heard, made me very uneasy. I was told that it was a nation of brigands and thieves. I was told that it was not even safe to go unarmed into the bazaars; that unless one had an armed escort, he was tempting fate. This was rank libel. The Afghans are the most friendly and hospitable people I have ever met. One could go to any Afghan home and be warmly received. He would get the best food the family had to offer. The house would be his home though he were a total stranger. If there were only one room,

it would be turned over to him. The Afghan men whom one meets in the villages are simple folk—honest and trusting. They are warm-hearted, generous and tolerant. I went among them alone and unarmed, with no badge to mark my rank or to identify me. They knew only that I was an American, and I received nothing but kindness.”

Among the fundamental traits of the people are simplicity, hospitality, love of nature, respect for religion (Islam), and a high sense of honour and patriotism. One of their most marked characteristics is their intense love of independence. The Afghan would patiently bear his misfortune or poverty, but cannot be made to reconcile himself to foreign rule. He is not to be tamed by subjection, and nothing induces him to surrender that love of independence which seems to be the essence of his nature. Foreigners, who have failed to understand this point and have tried to deprive him of his national independence, have had to pay heavily the price of their folly.

Alexander the Great had little difficulty in reducing Persia. The battles of Issus and Arbela sealed the fate of the great Archaemenian Empire. But when that great conqueror came forward to establish his authority over these freedom-loving people, he met the stiffest resistance of his military career. Everywhere in his line of advance fighting was of exceptional ferocity. Even though the country at the time of Alexander's invasion had no political unity and was in a condition of internal discord, weakness and chaos, it took the proud conqueror four to five long years to break the isolated resistance of these warlike people.

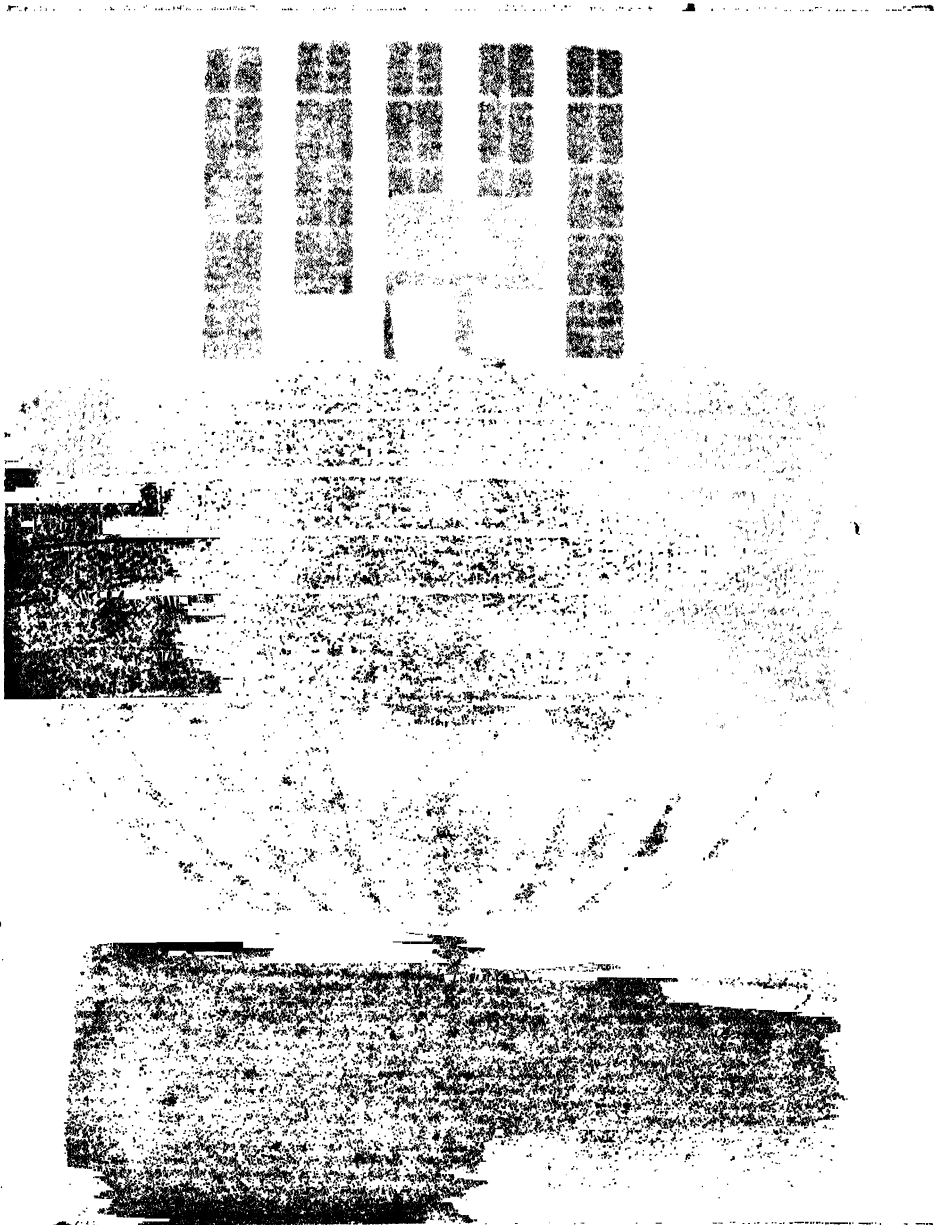
Similarly, the Arabs had little difficulty in over-running the vast Sassanian Empire. But when they penetrated to the vicinity of Zabul (Ghazni) and Kabul, they had to fall back

after sustaining heavy casualties. No nation or race has ever shown more dauntless courage or more indomitable energy than the Afghans in their wars with Arabs. The Arabs attacked Kabul and the Central Afghan plateau no less than six times, but all their efforts were frustrated and each time they had to fall back precipitately.

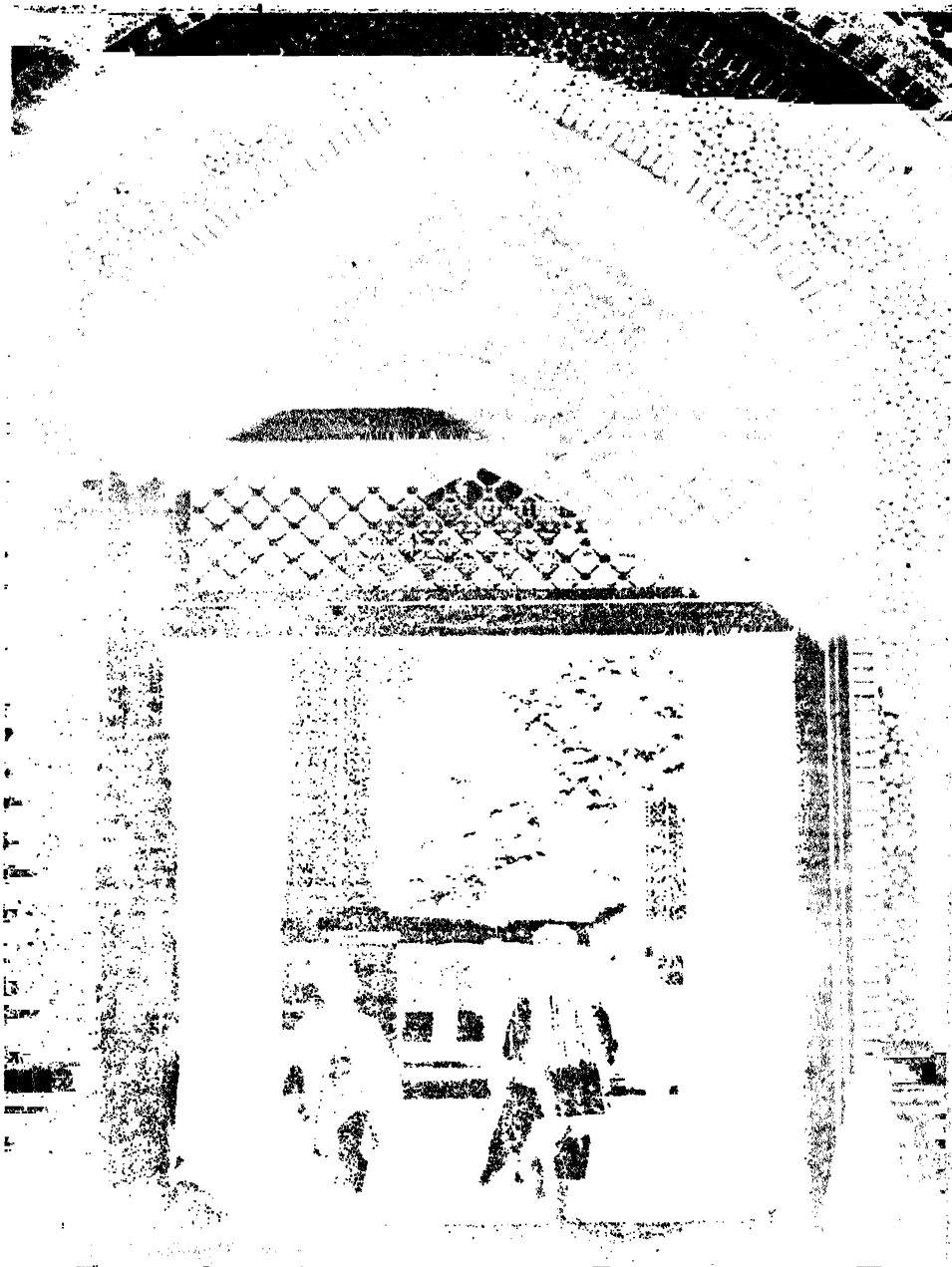
In modern times the regiments of the British army which stormed triumphantly through Africa and Asia, suffered crushing defeats at the hands of the Afghans. Only the Afghans defeated the British Empire, not once, but three times and at the Britishers' game of war. The disaster of the British troops—troops long accustomed to oriental fighting, during the First Afghan War (1838—42), cannot be explained in any way other than that the British were outfought by the Afghans who were armed with but primitive weapons. The Second Afghan War (1878—1881) was another debacle. The Third Afghan War (1919) proved conclusively that the vast development of Britain's fighting methods during those four years (1914—1918) did not enable her to subdue the Afghans.

The Afghan ideal of progress seems to consist in a proper balance of material advancement and spiritual renovation. It permits the assimilation of the substance of the great cultures of the world, without impairing its national individuality. The Afghans want to preserve a spiritual civilisation which is as important as material progress, realising that the Western civilisation, with all its great achievements in the field of science and art and other departments of knowledge, is lacking in this respect.

The Afghans are physically a very fine people. They are of robust build, strong, stalwart and muscular. They have high



**Ancient Stone cauldron, Kabul Museum.**



**The mausoleum of Abdullah Ansari at Herat Gazargah.  
A specimen of Afghan art of the 15th Century.**

noses, long faces and are of fair complexion. Their countenances have an air of manliness and deliberation. They are hardy and active, industrious and sober. No more potent testimony to their power exists than the record of the Anglo-Afghan wars.

Their manners are frank and open. Though manly and independent they are entirely free from conceit and ferocity. They are remarkable for their prudence, good sense and humour.

They have always been ardent sportsmen. From time immemorial they have realised that physical culture and sports are the important elements which enable one to overcome difficulties and privations, and still remain cheerful, courageous and firm. Physical endurance, ability to co-ordinate all movements on any terrain, and overcome parching heat and bitter frost—these qualities are acquired by the Afghans as a result of constant attention to national sports, such as horse-riding, mountaineering, and wrestling.

Even in present-day Afghan life, sports and physical culture occupy an important part. Besides their own national games, all modern European sports, such as football, volleyball, hockey, basketball, handball and tennis have been introduced and widely promoted throughout the country.

Among the Afghan games the one called Buzkashi (dragging the goat) is indeed a feat of horsemanship. It is chiefly in vogue in Northern Afghanistan (Mazar, Maimana, and Kataghan provinces). Like polo, it is played on horseback by two opposing teams, each consisting of 60 to 100 horsemen. The first thing to be done is to kill a goat, a calf or a sheep, and then to place the carcass in the middle of a circle. When this is done, a signal is given, and all the riders make a dash at the beheaded animal. The man who picks it up flings it across the

saddle in front of him, and goes off at full gallop; the others chasing him until one of them catches up with him. While still at full gallop the two riders struggle for the possession of the body. The man who gets it is in turn chased by others, and when the carcass falls to the ground; as it often does, it is picked up as the riders gallop by, the horsemen riding with one leg and arm thrown over the horse to enable them to reach the ground. So the game continues until one of the teams is able to bring the body of the animal to the appointed spot and drop it in the circle, thus scoring a goal. The speed and agility of these horses as well as the remarkable skill of the riders is a wonderful and awe-inspiring sight.

The great delight of the Afghans, both male and female, is to dance the Attan. From ten to twenty men or women stand up in a circle. A person takes his place within the circle to sing or play on some instrument. The dancers then go through a number of attitudes and figures, sometimes singing, sometimes shouting, at other times clapping their hands and snapping their fingers in unison. Every now and then they join hands and move first slowly then swiftly, sometimes making a full circle round one leg, according to the music, while all join in the chorus.

Another game which is commonly played in the country goes by the name of Ghursai. A man takes his left foot in his right hand, and hops about on one leg, endeavouring to knock down his opponent, who is advancing in the same way from the opposite direction. Hunting birds and animals is also a very popular amusement. The old methods of catching wild animals are still in vogue in some parts of the country. Men often go out with greyhounds (Afghan hounds), hawks, and falcons to catch birds and course hares, foxes and deer.



The more prosperous hunters, equipped with shotguns, have live decoys which they place in a kind of pond (Nowr as it is locally called), built especially for the event. When the wild ducks fly over, the Judas-ducks call, and their wild brothers come down to be shot.

The farmers and villagers capture hundreds of game birds without arms of any kind. A favourite method is to build across a small stream a pond which empties with a gentle current. When the pond empties, the hunter builds a low hut of mud and twigs across it. The hut has a trap entrance and no exit. A flight of weary and unsuspecting ducks is attracted to the pond by decoys and are made to feel so much at home that they spend the night there. As they sleep, the current wafts them gently into the trap and they finish on the dining tables.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the Afghans is their hospitality. The importance of this virtue is so much a national point of honour that their reproach to an inhospitable man is that he has no Pashtunwali, that is nothing of the customs of the Afghans. All persons indiscriminately are entitled to benefit by this practice, and a man who travels over the whole country, will never be in want of a meal, except perhaps in towns. For the feast given in honour of the guest, the host would not hesitate to kill the fattest sheep or the best fowls which he possesses. At dinner he presses the guest to have more and more, and entreats him not to spare, for there is plenty to eat. If the guest is not inclined to do full justice to all the dishes offered, the host feels rather insulted in the presence of his friends, who are always invited on such occasions.

Another remarkable custom peculiar to the Afghans is called Nang or Ninawati, that is, seeking the help or protection of

others. A man who is in difficulty or has a favour to ask goes to the house or tent of an Afghan on whom he depends, and refuses to sit on his carpet, or to partake of his hospitality until the boon is granted. The honour of the party thus solicited will incur a stain if he does not grant the favour asked of him. So far is this practice carried, that a man over-matched by his enemy, will sometimes go Ninawati to the house of another man, and entreat him to take up his quarrel, a request with which the other is obliged to comply. A still stronger appeal is made when a woman in distress sends her veil to an Afghan, calling upon him as her brother, and imploring his assistance for herself or her family. From this custom arises the obligation of protecting and defending a fugitive, even against the government, irrespective of his crime. Those who seek shelter under the roof of an Afghan are to be defended at all cost. The code followed by an Afghan is :

- (1) An Afghan must grant to all fugitives the right of asylum.
- (2) An Afghan must offer hospitality even to his dreaded enemy.
- (3) An Afghan must wipe out insult with insult.

Another strange custom goes by the name of "Ghag-Kawal", which literally means "calling". A lover, who is unable to secure the object of his love by any other means, usually resorts to this national custom. Repairing to the residence of his beloved, he fires into the air just in front of her door, thereby declaring his attachment to the girl. He then approaches her father or guardian through the elders of the tribe, entreating to forgive him for his audacity, and imploring the hand of his daughter in marriage. Refusal of such a request often leads to tribal feuds.

Another peculiar custom is known by the name of "Tega-Ikhodil", that is "Laying the Stone". The rival tribes and families, in times of national emergency forget their mutual jealousies and strife, unite together against their common foe, and promise to respect the treaty and carry on the struggle till the national aim is achieved.

A strange custom in vogue in Kabul and the hilly districts goes by the name of Barfi (Barf means snow). On the occasion of the first fall of snow, friends address congratulatory letters to one another, containing a short Persian couplet which runs thus:

My dear, snow has come,  
Snow is mine, but Barfi is yours.

Everybody on such occasions is on his guard and instructs his servants and family members not to receive any letter before first knowing the contents of it. Everyone tries to catch hold of the deliverer of such letters. If he is caught, he gets a good thrashing, and then is turned over to his master or the head of his family with face blackened. This means that the sender of the letter has lost the game—the Barfi, as it is called. He is then bound to arrange for a grand feast and to invite the winner and his friends to it. On the other hand, if the letter, by mistake, is received by the addressee and the deliverer makes good his escape, the addressee is to pay a similar penalty.

The Afghans pay much attention to good manners. Hand shaking and embracing are considered an important part of good manners. Even a stranger will be greeted with a hearty welcome and a hand-shake at any meeting.

The Afghans are light-hearted and sociable people. They do not laugh often, but they talk a good deal, and love a decent

joke. Picnic parties are often arranged on holidays. They are very fond of amusements. They play the flute, the rubab, a sort of lute or guitar, and the tanboor.

But the centre of Afghan life is the tea-house, hundreds of which dot every roadside. These are often clean open shelters which serve as clubs for the village people and passers-by. Here they gather round a big boiling samovar, quaffing tea, chatting and discussing their social and economic problems in a friendly atmosphere. Afghans are very fond of tea, especially green tea, drinking sometimes 15 to 20 cups in an hour. These tea-houses are seldom without a rubabi (one who plays on the rubab) with a large number of eager listeners making a circle around him keeping time with the music and nodding their heads in appreciation.

The Afghans love stories very much. The old men and women are great story-tellers, and the young folk listen with great interest to these stories, most of which are concerned with the deeds of national heroes or those of genii and fairies. During winter they generally gather round the Sandali (a sort of stove) or the hearth, listening attentively to the grandma, who is an expert story-teller.

The basis of Afghan society is patriarchal, as it was in the days of yore. Father or grandfather (generally called Mushar or Spingere—the venerable old man) is the head of the family. He must be consulted on all important family matters. No one should marry without his sanction. Permission to marry a daughter of his family is asked of him by the suitor through the mediation of an intimate friend or elders of the locality. It is a long and tedious process and sometimes takes weeks and months before an agreement is reached. The selection of the

mate is generally not the choice of the youth, but is looked upon as the chief concern of the parents. Parents as well as other members of the family have a good deal to say who should marry and whom. The wedding is celebrated in the house of the bride's parents, where the bridegroom, accompanied by his relatives and parents, repair in procession. After the nuptial is over, the bridegroom takes his wife's hand and returns to his house. On entering it, like the Aryans of old, he leads her to the family hearth (Naghare, as it is called). She tastes of the sweet dish (Halwa, a pudding) prepared for the occasion, and then becomes a bona fide member of her husband's family.

The Afghan family circle is a genial one. The wife is the mistress of the house. Women are generally considered equals. Husband and wife discuss family problems in an atmosphere of extreme friendliness and arrive at decisions. The husband assumes dominance in certain spheres, usually in managing finances and business arrangements, while the wife looks after children and other household affairs. The fact that the family atmosphere is healthy is evidenced by the fact of the lowest divorce rate in the world. A woman, after the death of her husband, is entitled to a share of his property.

As the family can only be continued in the male line, great importance is attached to the birth of a male child. An abundance of sons is constantly prayed for. Lack of male issue is looked upon as a bad omen.

The Afghan government plays a great rôle in the social and economic advancement of the people and has taken active steps in eradicating some of the old and ruinous customs and rites. Previously an Afghan youth had to buy his mate by paying a huge sum of money (called Walwar or Sheerbaha) to her parents. This is now strictly banned by the government and

defaulters have to pay heavy fines. The municipalities in the cities and towns, and the government officials in rural areas have to keep a keen watch over these matters. Similarly, the government stepped in to curtail the former heavy expenses of marriage ceremonies and mourning, (called Murdahdari). Previously, great feasts were arranged on such occasions, which generally lasted for three continuous days and nights, and the expenses incurred were generally beyond the means of the parties concerned. These have now been reduced to a minimum. In case of marriages, the guests are invited to an evening tea, costing not more than a few hundred Afghanis, while the mourning ceremony is totally abolished. Friends and relatives now repair to the mosque (between 8 a.m. to 12 noon) to sympathize with the bereaved and pray for the departed soul of the deceased.

Modern means of transportation and communication, such as cars, tractors, airlines, radio, telegraph and telephone, and diffusion of knowledge have affected the lives of the people even in the remotest part of the country, and have been instrumental in bringing about some important changes in their social life.

The Afghans are extremely religious. Islam of the Sunni doctrine is the State religion, and almost all the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Turkomans, and Uzbeks belong to this sect. The Hazaras and Kizilbashs are mostly Shias. Besides, there are a few thousand Sikhs, Hindus and Jews living in cities and carrying on lucrative businesses.

The Afghans are of a tolerant nature and have a liberal attitude towards the followers of others religions, who enjoy perfect freedom in the observance of their religious ceremonies in every part of the country. On the occasions of religious festivals, they gladly go to the temples of their countrymen and take part in their festivities.



Agricultural farm at Aliabad, Kabul.



Afghan Karakul skins are famous throughout the world.



The masses are frequently fatalistic and superstitious, believing in evil spirits and supernatural beings, whom they call by such names as *Moder-i-All*, *Shishak*, *Ghul-i-Byaban*. They believe that they generally haunt old neglected places, trees, graveyards, river banks, streams and "*Byabans*" (wilderness), and have the power to injure human beings. Strange stories are often heard of the mischiefs done by these ghosts and apparitions. Round the necks of the newly-born babes various sorts of talismans and amulets are hung with a view to avert evils. While praising any child for any attribute, especially good health, "*Nam-i-Khuda*" (God's name) must be said at once to avert the evil eye which open praise will beget. The evil eye is also supposed to be possessed by some persons, and God's name must be spoken to keep off its calamitous effect.

Some Afghans also claim to predict future events by studying the scapula of a sheep or by opening the *Dewan* of *Hafiz*, the well-known Persian poet, at random.

The Afghan standard of morality is pretty high. Drinking wine and other intoxicants, prostitution, and gambling are strictly forbidden throughout the country, and defaulters are severely punished.

**PASTORAL LIFE :** The manner of life of the Afghans is by no means uniform throughout the country. A small portion of the population is still leading a sort of nomadic life. The *Kochis* (as they are called) have no fixed habitat and chiefly live in tents—*Ghizhdi*. These tents are made of extended lattice work, covered with black felt manufactured from wool, and can be easily taken down, folded up and carried on the backs of the camels and cows. Life is chiefly dependent on the rearing of herds of camels, horses, cattle, sheep and goats. The flocks and

herds are driven back and forth between the lowland and highland pastures, over routes which they and their ancestors have followed for centuries. In so doing they generally cross international boundary lines, but it is often without objection on the part of the governments concerned: They claim certain grazing rights in pastures which they visit with their flocks, and these rights are seldom disputed. The various tribes wander over definite areas, recognized as their special preserves; but all seek higher districts in the middle of summer to avoid the heat and pests of the plains, and return to lower levels for the winter.

In these migrations they carry with them all of their possessions and so they live very simply. A single tent shelters a whole family. During the day time it usually furnishes all the shade to be had, while at night it can be closed to give protection from cold and winds.

It is indeed a fine spectacle to meet a caravan of Kochis moving. Huge shaggy camels lumber down the rocky steeps, followed by donkeys, horses, sheep, goats, and fierce-eyed watchdogs. Among the animals walk the proud Kochis, tall, lean, fiery-looking, often carrying rifles on their shoulders. The women, contemptuous of veil, walk stalwartly along with the caravan, some even carrying guns. Young children, lambs, and hens are tied firmly on the top of the luggage.

At night they set up their woven tents, unroll their rugs and set the kettles and cooking pots over their smoky fires. Their only wealth is their livestock. These furnish the staple articles of diet; meat, butter, milk, cheese, curd, and kuroot (dried curded milk). Their wool is spun and woven into cloth for clothing, or is used in making rugs and tents.

This pastoral life, though a difficult one, has many advantages. It is carefree and secure, uniting the advantages of various climates, and affording relief from the monotonous city life in frequent change of scenes, and never-failing sources of field sports. The nomad, accustomed to hardships, is strong, well-built and courageous.

The number of these tent-dwellers has greatly diminished during the past few years, and is still rapidly dwindling. The construction of dams and the creation of new acreage have been undoubtedly, a strong inducement to these wandering tribes to adopt a more settled mode of life.

## PART THREE

## . Language and Literature\*

Pashto is the chief language of the Afghans and extends throughout the country. It is also spoken in Pashtunistan. Two main dialects are recognized—Yusufzai or Eastern and Kandahari.

Next to Pashto, Persian is the most important language of the country. It is spoken mostly in the cities and towns. Afghan Persian, or perhaps one should call it by its historical and literary name “Dari”, still preserves the old distinction of madjhl and maruf between *u* and *o* and *i* and *e*, which does not exist in Iranian Persian of today.

The Afghans in all ages have played an important rôle in the cultural development of the civilized nations. The Rigveda of the early Aryans and the Avesta of Zoroaster are two of the most important classics of this country that have given the world religions and philosophies, which in range, depth, variety and power still command universal admiration.

We give here a short list of some of the Afghan writers and philosophers of the early Islamic period, who in creative power, quality of workmanship, intellectual force as well as in the delineation of soft emotions, in dramatic touch, in elegance, purity, vividness and grace, in sublimity of thought and style are to be compared with the best writers of the world. But for the works of these men, Persian literature could not have attained the high standard of excellence which it enjoys today. The first attempt to compose verses in Persian was made under

\*Compiled by Dr. Ahmad Jawid, Professor of Persian Literature, Faculty of Letters, Kabul University.

the Tahirids (820—872 A.D.). Of the many poets that flourished in this period, Hanzala-i-Badghisi of Herat (died in 841) is first in merit and in point of time. He was the author of a number of lyrics and quatrains. Unfortunately, all his verses are lost and we possess only two couplets of his which are cited by Nizami Arozi.

Of the most accomplished writers of the Samanid period (874—1000 A.D.) mention may be made of Shahid-i-Balkhi, Abu Shukur-i-Balkhi and Abdul Fath Busti. Abu Shukur-i-Balkhi is the oldest literary representative of this period. He invented the famous verse form known as Masnawi or the double-rhymed poem, and was also the first poet to compose in the Rubai or quatrain form which in later centuries became the most popular vehicle of mystical thought. He may fairly be considered as the forerunner of Daqiqi in Masnawi. From the few specimens of Abu Shukur that have come down to us, it appears that he was the perfect master of this form of verse. Abul Fath Busti is another very famous writer of this age. After the downfall of the Samanids he came to Ghazni and joined the literary circle of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.

**Rabia-i-Balkhi:** A very interesting and conspicuous literary figure of this period is a woman poet, Rabia by name. She was born at Balkh towards the close of the ninth century A.D. and was a contemporary of Rodaki, the poet-laureate of the Samanid court. Her surpassing beauty coupled with her mental accomplishment spread her fame far and wide and she naturally became the cynosure of neighbouring eyes. But she was passionately in love with a handsome Turkish youth, Baktash by name, who met the advances of his sweetheart with equal ardour. Their love soon became the talk of the neighbourhood. When she learned that it was not possible for her to marry the lover, her

wounded heart and delicate spirit turned to meditation and found solace in refuge. The pious believers could not even tolerate this "sin" ; so they secretly despatched her to "heaven." Her tragic death, however, excited universal sympathy and invested her with a halo of romantic idealism.

Rabia was a richly gifted poetess, and her exquisite verses take us to a high pitch of mystic thought and absorption. Her poetry is the dominant note of Persian theosophy.

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (998—1030 A.D.) was a great conqueror as well as an eminent patron of learning. He himself was a cultured man and invited the poets, leading writers and scholars of the age to his magnificent court where he gave them all possible help. Owing to this liberal encouragement, Sultan's court at Ghazni soon became the rendezvous of the most brilliant scholars and savants—such as Firdausi, Unsuri, Farukhi, Asadi, Asjadi, Ghazali, Behaqui and Manuchehri. Unsuri, the poet-laureate of the court of Ghazni, was a native of Balkh. He was in the prime of life when he was sent to Ghazni by Nasr bin Subuktagin, Sultan's brother. Mahmud received him warmly and made him the poet-laureate of his court. He lived in great pomp and show and had hundreds of pages to wait upon him. Besides being an eminent poet he was a great philosopher and an erudite scholar. The four hundred poets that formed the famous "Round-Table" of the Sultan took advice and inspiration from him. Unsuri is noted for his beautiful metaphors and pure, vigorous diction. His death occurred in 1049 A.D.

Farukhi of Seistan was a celebrated poet, a very skilful harpist and a keen observer of nature. His poetical works display some of the best qualities of the Persian poetry of this period. He is noted for his famous elegy composed immediately

after the death of the Sultan. Asjadi was a native of Herat but received his training at Ghazni under the supervision of Unsurî.

Avicenna, or Ibn Sina as he is known in the East, the world famous philosopher and physician, was born at Afshana, a small village near Bukhara in 980 A.D. Abdulla, Avicenna's father, was a native of Balkh. Avicenna was educated at Bukhara, where the Samanid Nuh II had his court. By the age of ten he had learnt the Quran by heart. He then applied himself to the study of arithmetic, geometry, Muslim jurisprudence, logic and metaphysics. Not long afterwards he was called upon to treat Nuh ibn Mansur for an illness which the others had failed to cure. Avicenna succeeded remarkably and was rewarded by the grateful ruler with a high post at the court and was also permitted to use the royal library. There he found a large collection of rare books and was thereby enabled to extend his knowledge still further.

After the collapse of the Samanids, Avicenna went to Gurgan, in north-east Persia, where he began the *Qanun fil Tibb*, the "Cannon of Medicine", the first of his two major works. His second famous book is called *Kitab-i-Shifa*, the "Book of Remedy", a treatise on Aristotelian philosophy and science.

Avicenna had been endowed with an excellent constitution, but in his later days he overtaxed his strength and fell into ill-health. He died at Hamadan in 1037 A.D.

Avicenna is looked upon as a great authority in philosophy and medicine, and his book, *The Shifa*, written in Arabic, is a monument of patient research, critical study and close observation. Some of his works were used as text books in European universities until the close of the 19th century.

Abdullah Ansari of Herat was a voluminous writer and a great philosopher. He possesses a clear, straightforward style. His dominant theme is the transitory character of this life. His *Munajat* "prayers" is a fine specimen of Persian prose. He was born in Herat in 1006 and died there in 1088. His mausoleum is held in greatest veneration even to this day. Nasir-i-Khusro, a great writer and poet, was born at Qubadiyan, near Balkh in 1004 A.D. He was well-versed in mathematics, Greek philosophy, natural science and Oriental philosophy.

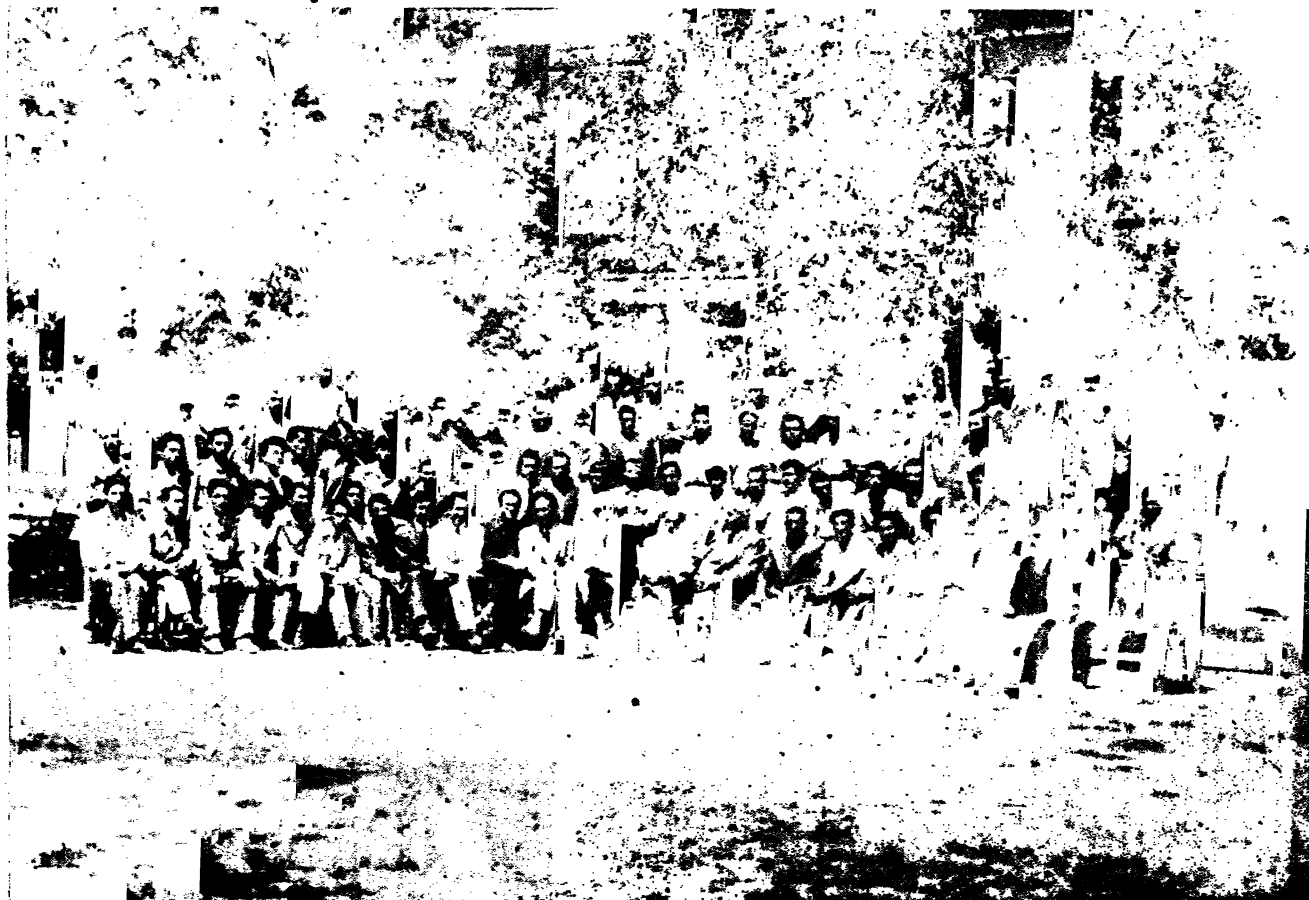
Rashid-ud Din Watwat was born at Balkh. He was the poet-laureate of Sultan Atsiz Khwarazmshah and possessed great powers as a writer and a poet. He died in 1182 A.D.

Sanai : Abul Majd Majdud Sanai, the famous mystic poet and one of the greatest theological writers of the age, was a native of Ghazni. He flourished in the reigns of the Ghaznavid Sultans—Ibrahim (1059-1099), his son Masud (1099-1114) and his grandson Bahram Shah (1118-1152). He died between 1140 and 1150 A.D. at Ghanzi, where his mausoleum still exists.

He started his career as court panegyrist. An accident changed the entire course of his life and made him devote his time to religious exercises, pious meditation and the composition of Sufic poetry. His poetry is among the most eloquent, learned and powerful works of the age. Some of his poems are looked upon as the best specimens of Persian poetry.

Rumi : Jalalud Din Mohammed is known in the East as Maulana or Maulawi, in the West as Rumi. He was born at Balkh in 1202 A.D. When he was six years old his father Baha Walad, a teacher and theologian of note, decided to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. He thus began a period of travels which lasted throughout his son's most impressionable years. He visited the main cultural centres of the Near East and finally





Faculty of Letters, Kabul University. Staff & Students (1956).



settled at Qoniya (Iconium), in Asia Minor. Maulana died there in 1274. His grand tomb at Qoniya may still be seen.

Rumi is one of the greatest Sofi poets of all ages.

**Amir Khusro :** The father of Amir Khusro, Amir Moham-mad Saifud Din, came from Balkh to India and settled at Patiala, where Khusro was born in 1253. Khusro was a brilliant boy and commenced literary work at a very early age. He was a great writer and produced a large number of works both in prose and poetry. There was no form of Persian poetry which he left untouched and in each of these he attained singular success. The Timurids (1405-1519 A. D.), like the Ghaznavids, were great patrons of learning and the arts. Their court at Herat was a resort of scholars, artists and philosophers. Behzad, the well-known Oriental painter, lived at their court. One of the greatest writers of this age is Amir Alisher Nawai. He was born in 1440 and received his education in the same college with his future sovereign, Sultan Hussain Mirza. He was first appointed as the Keeper of the Royal Seal, but was soon promoted to the highest post—that of the Prime Minister of the Sultan. He was no less distinguished for his great learning and high statesmanship than for his munificent patronage of letters. He is the founder of the famous Khilasiyya convent of Herat, a retreat for literary men of merit. His home also was open to scholars of all nationalities, whom he received with every mark of respect.

**Mirkhond :** Mirkhond was born in 1433. His father, a pious and learned man, lived at Balkh. After the death of his father, Mirkhond went to Herat, where he succeeded in gaining the favour of that celebrated patron of letters, Alisher Nawai. He received every mark of kindness and encouragement from this distinguished personage and began at his request his great work on universal history, *Rauzat-us-Safa* in 1474 A.D. It is one of

the most marvelous literary achievements and the greatest single production of the age. In the opinion of competent judges, there is no oriental work in Persian that has greater literary merit or more valuable information than Mirkhond's history. It is comprised of seven large volumes and a geographical appendix. The author had just compiled the sixth volume when he died at Balkh after a lingering illness (1498 A. D.). He had worked on these six volumes for a period of thirty-three years. The last and seventh volume was compiled by his grandson, Khondmir.

**Jami :** Abdur Rahman Jami, the last classical Persian poet, was born in 1414, at Jam, a village in Herat. He was endowed with such extensive and varied learning that he was thought peerless in his own time. Even princes, who were themselves men of erudition and possessed great talents, lavished upon him the most unbounded praise and the highest honours. He was an intimate friend of Sultan Abu Said (1452-1467) and his successor, Sultan Hussain Bayaqla (1467-1504). Alisher had great admiration for the vast knowledge and exemplary character of Jami.

Jami has a lucid, fascinating style and a magnificent diction. He was not only a great poet but a moral writer and teacher as well. He died at Herat in 1492.

Sultan Hussain Mirza himself was a man of great talents and fine literary taste. He invited to his court the most cultured spirits of the time and appointed them to responsible government posts.

During the Timurid period the cities of Afghanistan became brilliant with architectural masterpieces. Herat, the capital, was magnificently embellished with palaces, mosques, shrines and madrasas (college). New materials and new techniques came into use, some of them reflecting Chinese influence. Marble,

alabaster, granite, jade and coloured tiles sheathed the structural fabric of these monuments. The task of cutting, fitting and fixing mosaic faience panels took several years. Members of the royal family, especially, Shah Rukh, his gifted wife Gohar Shad Agha and Sultain Hussain Bayaqlra personally supervised these constructions.

In 1417 Gohar Shad Agha ordered the construction of two structures of great size and elegance. One was a Mussalah (a place for public worship) located outside the city. The other was a madrasa.

Hussain Bayaqlra, in his turn, adorned his capital with hospitals, and other public buildings. Immediately adjacent to the Mussalah of Gohar Shad Agha he built a madrasa almost one hundred and fifty feet high, forming a startling pattern against the sky.

His minister and keeper of the royal seal, Ali Sher Nawai, also contributed a good deal to the embellishment of Herat. Through the efforts of these people Herat became one of the most beautiful cities of the East. This is why some of historians call this period "The Renaissance of Asia".

**Pashto Literature.** Literature in both the Persian and Pashto languages had their origins during the early Muslim centuries. Pashtu was in current use during the Ghaznavid and Timurid periods. Unfortunately, most of the literature is lost and only fragments of the earliest poems have survived in Arabic translations. The *Putteh Khazana* (Secret Treasure) published in Khandahar in 1729 A.D., included Pashto poems of the eighth and ninth centuries. Amir Kror, called Jehan Pehlavan, a ruler of Ghor in the second half of the eighth century, is said to have composed poems in Pashto and later in the ninth century Sheikh Raza Lodi,

wrote Pashto poetry. From that time until the 16th century there was little Pashto Literature of note

The body of existing literature of Pashto begins with the 16th century, and is mainly poetical in character, but there are also a few important works in prose, especially histories, such as Akhund Darveza's Makhzan-i-Pashto and Makhzan-i-Islam, and Afzal Khan Khattak Tarikh-i-Murassa. The principal poets are Khushhal Khan Khattak, Mirza Khan Ansari, a poet of the Sufi school, and the popular poets Abdur Rahman and Abdul Hamid, who have both left Diwans of a mystical character. Abdul Qadir Khattak, Ahmad Shah Durrani and Peer Mohammed Kakar are also looked upon as some of the best Pashto poets of the age.

Khushhal Khan Khattak is the most famous of the Afghan poets. He was the chief of Khattaks, a powerful and warlike tribe living around Peshawar. He was born in the early part of the 17th century, and died at a ripe old age towards its close. He lived through a portion of the reign of the Emperor Jehangir, the whole of that of Shah Jehan, and the greater part of that of Aurangzeb. Shah Jehan treated him kindly and generously. Aurangzeb reversed the temporizing policy of his father in relations with the Afghan tribes and thus made a bitter enemy of Khushhal Khan. Khushhal never alludes to Aurangzeb in his poems except in terms of extreme hatred and contempt. Khushhal's poems are full of expressions of patriotic feelings, descriptions of contest with the Mughals and of reference to his bold stand against the Emperor. He appears to have been indeed a man of most extraordinary vigour of mind and exceptional versatility of talent. His poems are the true expression of the national character and the circumstances of his adventurous life,

The present Afghan Government encourages the diffusion of the Pashto language among all classes by every possible means. Every Government official is required to learn this language and to appear in an examination. Special classes are conducted in each office to teach Pashto. Because of this encouragement, Pashto literature has made considerable progress recently and a large number of books and periodicals have appeared.

## PART FOUR

### The Government

**The Constitution :** Afghanistan is a Constitutional Monarchy, and the laws are based on the religious laws of Islam, according to the school of Imam Abu Hanifa. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament, which is made up of the King, a Senate and a National Assembly.

The written constitution of the country had its origin in 1923 ; the unwritten constitution, based on national customs and traditions, dates back to the pre-Islamic period. The written constitution promulgated in 1923 was amended twice ; once in the year 1928, and a second time in 1931 during the reign of the late King, Mohammad Nadir Shah-i-Shahid. According to this constitution, Afghanistan is a constitutional monarchy, Parliament consists of :

(1) The King.

(2) The Majlis-i-Shura-i-Milli (the House of Representatives). The members of this House are elected directly by the people from all provinces and districts according to the Election laws for a period of three years. The House of Representatives consists of 171 members. Suffrage is not restricted to any property or tax qualifications, but is extended to all Afghan nationals of over twenty years of age, possessing sound moral character.

(3) The Majlis-i-Ayan (the Senate) is composed of sixty experienced elders, nominated by the King in recognition of their past services to the country. They are men who have had long experience in public affairs as governors, ambassadors, or Cabinet ministers, and constitute, therefore, something corresponding to a "Council of Elder Statesmen".



Parliament alone has the power to pass new laws, and to amend or repeal the existing ones. If a question is approved by the Senate, but is not accepted by the House of Representatives, the matter is referred to a Committee composed of 40 members, twenty from each House. The Committee, after discussing and investigating fully the controversial issue, passes it on to the House of Representatives together with its recommendations. If the House is still in disagreement, the question is referred to the King, whose decision is final. The representatives of each House enjoy perfect freedom in the expression of their opinions while discussing a problem. The Parliament also has the power to control the Executive. Individual Ministers are responsible to the Parliament for their actions, and the Cabinet as a whole for its joint administration.

**Loya-Jirga (the Grand Assembly):** In times of national emergency a Loya-Jirga is held. All the prominent figures of the country are invited to take part in this Grand Assembly. The last such Assembly was held in 1955 wherein the members approved of the Government's foreign policy as regards Pashtunistan and the purchase of arms and ammunition from foreign countries.

**The King:** In view of the innumerable services of the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah on various occasions for the cause of the country, the nation, through its representatives, has made the following provisions regarding the right of succession to the Afghan throne and the duties of the King under the Constitution :

(1) That the House of Nadir Shah will be the reigning house of Afghanistan.

(2) That the Khutba will be read and coins struck in the name of the King.

(3) The conferring of honours and titles, the appointment of the Prime Minister, approval of appointments or dismissal of Cabinet Ministers, the appointment of the Commander-in-Chief, the declaration or termination of war will fall within the royal prerogatives.

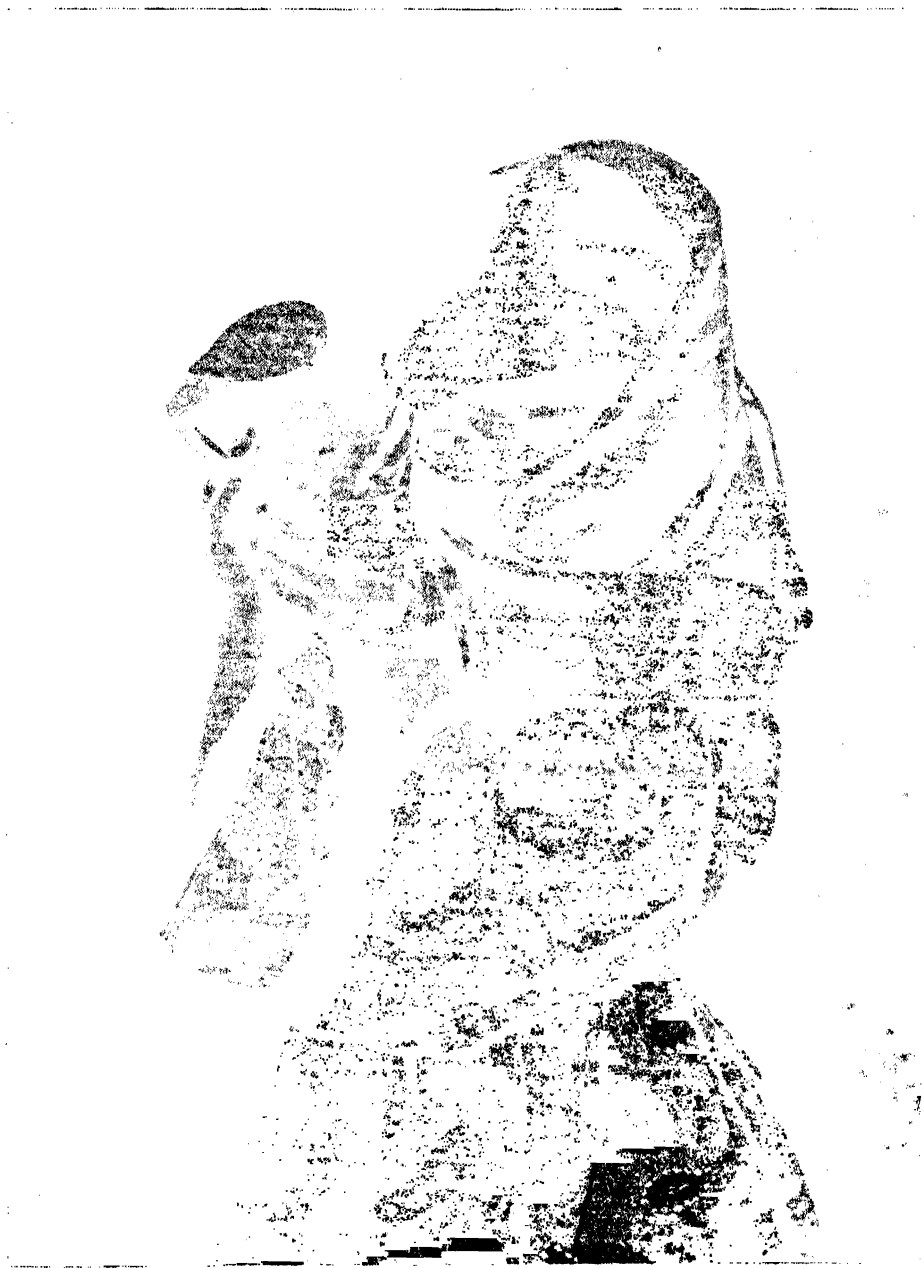
(4) The King before his coronation, pledges himself to the nation in the presence of the members of the Parliament :

- (a) to protect the true religion of Islam ;
- (b) to defend the independence of the country ;
- (c) to safeguard the right of the people ;
- (d) to endeavour for the material and educational development of the country and the welfare of the people ;
- (e) and to rule the country in accordance with the sacred laws of Islam and the Fundamental Laws of the country.

According to this Constitution the King must belong to the Hanafi sect of Islam.

#### **Duties & Powers of the House of Representatives :**

- (1) Election of the President of the House.
- (2) Inquiry into every Government Department and ratification legislative bills or proposals.
- (3) Checking all financial matters, new taxes and new evaluation of taxable property.
- (4) Investigation and approval of Budget.
- (5) Approving and chartering of commercial companies.
- (6) Approval of treaties and negotiations, sanctioning of commercial, industrial and agricultural monopolies, foreign as well as local.
- (7) Approval of the debts, foreign as well as local.



An Afghan girl with a water pitcher.



An Afghan girl in National dress.

Except in the case of secret sessions, which are held under specified rulings, the debates of the House of Representatives take place openly, and spectators and press representatives are not barred from entering the House and hearing the discussions.

**The Cabinet :** The executive power is in the hands of the Cabinet Ministers, who are nominated by the Prime Minister with the approval of the King. The Ministers carry on their duties under the rules and regulations passed from time to time by the Parliament. The Ministers, individually and jointly, are responsible to the Parliament, and may be tried by a Supreme Court for negligence of duty entrusted to them. In other matters outside their official capacity they are treated like ordinary citizens.

Internal disagreements in the Cabinet may lead to the resignation of individual members and their replacement, or may even cause the resignation of the entire Cabinet.

The present Cabinet consists of a Prime Minister (called Sadri-Azam) and the following Ministers and Presidents :

- (1) Minister of National Defence.
- (2) Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- (3) Minister for the Interior.
- (4) Minister for Justice.
- (5) Minister for Finance.
- (6) Minister for Education.
- (7) Minister for Trade & Commerce.
- (8) Minister for Health.
- (9) Minister for Public Works.
- (10) Minister for Mines & Industries.
- (11) Minister for Posts & Telegraphs.

- (12) Minister of Agriculture.
- (13) President of the National Assembly.
- (14) President of the Senate.
- (15) President of the Press Department.
- (16) President of the Department of Tribal Affairs.

Ministers who have no seat in the Cabinet :

- (1) Minister of the Royal Court (Wazir-i-Durbar.)
- (2) Chief Secretary (Sar-Munshi) to H.M. the King.

### **Rights of any Afghan Citizen :**

According to the Constitution every Afghan national, irrespective of colour, race, creed or religion, has equal rights and is eligible to all the Government posts. No person is to be imprisoned, detained or punished without due trial by a law court. Slavery and all sorts of forced labour are strictly prohibited and defaulters are dealt with severely.

**The Afghan Coat of Arms:** The Coat of Arms of the King and the official seal of the Government consist of a design representing a dome, two minarets, and the pulpit of a mosque (the Arch & Pulpit) with the 'mehrab' (niche) in the centre, banners on either side, and the entire design almost completely encircled by sheaves of wheat. In 1747 A.D., when Ahmed Shah Durrani was elected King of Afghanistan in a tribal Jirga (Assembly) held at Kandahar, a certain dervish, Sabar by name, made a wreath of sheaves of wheat and placed it on his head instead of a crown. Since then the sheaves of wheat in the form of a wreath appear on the royal seal and all official documents.

**The Afghan Flag :** The Afghan flag carries the above insignia in the centre of a rectangular field consisting of three stripes—black, red and green,—placed perpendicularly.

**Afghan Foreign Policy :** Afghanistan is a peace-loving country. As in the First World War, it was able to keep its complete neutrality in World War II. It wants to have the most friendly relations with all countries of the world, especially its neighbours. It has no aggressive designs, nor would it submit to interference in its internal affairs from any quarter. It is a firm and faithful member of the United Nations Organization, and sincerely believes that this world organization can save mankind from the horrors of modern warfare and annihilation. It is also of the opinion that international disputes, however serious they may be, can best be solved through the medium of this world association of nations by peaceful means in an atmosphere of mutual trust, goodwill and cordiality, and not by any recourse to arms, which eventually would ruin both victor and vanquished.

## **Education in Afghanistan\***

As the cradle of ancient civilizations, Afghanistan has a glorious past. History bears witness to the fact that the eras of learning and civilization through which she has passed were never limited by any physical or geographical boundaries. On the contrary, she has reared scholars and literary personalities of world renown. But modern educational institutions in Afghanistan are not more than 50 years old. During this period the setting up of educational and training establishments for public instruction have been made part of public services. Schools have been established in all parts of the country at State expense. These Schools are being daily extended and improved upon according to modern educational methods and environmental needs.

At present a Ministry, called the "Ministry of Education" exists for the purpose of controlling and maintaining a steady progress in education matters. The Ministry is headed by the Minister of education, who is a Cabinet Minister and personally responsible to the Parliament. Two Deputies designated "Instructional Deputy Minister" and "Administrative Deputy Minister" are at the helm of all educational and administrative works of the Ministry. Under the provisions of the Constitution, primary education in Afghanistan, for the first six years, is free and compulsory. Middle, secondary and higher education for both boys and girls is also free ; textbooks, exercise books, pens, slates, and other supplies are all provided free of cost by the Ministry. In schools with hostels, food, clothing,

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\*Based on a Report entitled "Education in Afghanistan" published by the Ministry of Education.



bedding, and all other necessary expenses of the students are borne by the State.

The Afghan Government, within the limits of its resources, is steadily encouraging the educational advancement of the people and devotes about 20% of its total revenue to education. Of course, lack of trained teachers is at present detrimental to rapid progress in this line. It has been estimated that no less than 30,000 trained teachers are required for universal elementary education. The present Teachers' Training Schools and Colleges produce from 150 to 200 teachers a year. Today, more than fifty per cent of the persons in the teaching profession are untrained. Even assuming a high degree of natural aptitude and devotion to work, lack of technical training is a bar to complete efficiency.

Elementary schools in Afghanistan have six grades. Secondary education also covers a period of six years. After twelve successful years in the public schools, a student is allowed to join one of the colleges (called Faculties). There are at present nine degree colleges affiliated with a Kabul University, *viz.*, the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Letters, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Civil Service, Faculty of Theology, and Faculty for Girls. In addition to these, there is an "Institute of Education", which is also attached to the University. This Institute is supervised by Afghan teachers assisted by specialists from Columbia University. In addition, there is also a Medical School, a Military School, a Military College, a Commercial School, two Technical Institutes, a School for Mechanical Crafts, a School for Carpentry, Tailoring and Fine Arts, schools for adults, both men and women, School for Islamic Studies, a School for Nurses, and a School of Agriculture.

The first Lycee (Intermediate College) was established in Afghanistan during the reign of the late Amir Habibullah Khan in 1903. The School was staffed by Indian teachers, and its curriculum was based on the Indian system of education. After Afghanistan achieved its independence, the Government realized that Habibia College alone could not meet the educational needs of the country. During the reign of Amanullah Khan, the foundation was laid for new schools such as Istiklal, Nijat, and Ghazi, and English, German and French were also added to the curriculum. A large number of students, both boys and girls, were sent abroad (to Turkey, Germany and France) for higher education. A movement for better educational facilities was therefore set afoot. Unfortunately, these lycees had not made much progress when the catastrophic upheaval of 1929 swept the country. The schools were closed and the educational programme collapsed. After the emancipation of the country at the hands of King Mohammad Nadir Shah, renewed attention was paid to the educational uplift of the country. Under the patronage of the Government, the lycees re-opened and commenced to forge ahead at full speed. The Istiklal and Nijat Lycees presented graduates for the first time in 1931 and 1934, respectively.

Inasmuch as economic, agricultural, industrial, administrative and social development in the country needed qualified personnel, teachers, and administrators, the Ministry of Education concentrated its educational resources on the following three areas in conformity with the views of the Government.

- (1) To train teachers abroad and within the country ;
- (2) To train administrative personnel for the various Government Departments ;

- (3) To establish primary and secondary schools in the provinces, and to spread literacy among the masses.

In spite of the crippling effects of the revolution and many economic difficulties, the Government gradually and successfully forged ahead with its programme until the outbreak of World War II which again brought all activities, especially in the field of education, to a standstill. Most of the foreign teachers (Germans, and Italians) were forced to leave Afghanistan. Books and teaching materials were difficult to obtain, and what could be procured was not enough. The result was that further expansion was not possible and fewer students were admitted into the school.

After the War, the Ministry of Education carefully reviewed its plans and began implementing its programmes in earnest. Here is a summary of what the Ministry is attempting to accomplish :

- (1) To strengthen the teachers' training schools, administratively and educationally ;
- (2) To make primary and secondary school programmes more functional in character ;
- (3) To strengthen technical, commercial and agricultural schools ;
- (4) To strengthen the Faculties of Letters and Science for the training of secondary schools teachers ;
- (5) To engage the services of national and foreign experts ;
- (6) To complete existing school buildings and to lay foundations for new ones ;
- (7) To increase the number of primary schools and to strengthen them in every way ;

- (8) To increase publications of the Ministry of Education and to establish a printing press of its own ;
- (9) To open village schools where regular primary schools cannot be established ;
- (10) To open courses for adult education and to improve existing ones ;
- (11) To seek educational assistance from friendly countries, and from UNESCO, and to put to proper use the aid received ;
- (12) To reconsider administrative organizations and their duties ;
- (13) To revise textbooks, and to complete teaching guides to text books ;
- (14) To obtain teaching materials from within and without the country ;
- (15) To revise the curriculum of various schools ;
- (16) To enlighten the masses of the country by publishing materials of common interest ;
- (17) To improve hostels and boarding houses ;
- (18) To strengthen provincial secondary schools ;
- (19) To revise manuals and textbooks ;
- (20) To send larger numbers of students abroad for higher educational training at Government expense ;
- (21) To take advantage of scholarships and fellowships offered by friendly countries and by international Organizations.

Among the recent developments made by the Ministry of Education, is the establishment of a new Department of

Community and Fundamental Education. This Department has been set up to co-operate with the Rural Development Project, to implement education in the provinces, to open courses for adult education, and to supervise students of teacher training school who are being trained in the Rural Development Project. It is hoped that this Department will help the Ministry of Education considerably in achieving its goal of raising standards of living.

Today the Ministry of Education is equipped with an efficient staff, men of great abilities and talents, and considerable educational experience. It has contact with international organizations and what many educational institutions of friendly countries, and is making increasing use of the assistance and recommendations extended to it.

### **Community Development Activities in Afghanistan**

From the point of view of technology, the people of Afghanistan have been left several miles behind in the caravan of today's highly developed society. With a view to improving the socio-economic condition of the rural people who constitute 95% of the total population of the country, the Government of Afghanistan in January, 1952, invited the United Nations Technical Assistance Mission to submit proposals for the establishment of community development centres in the country.

A Committee composed of experts from Specialized Agencies of the United Nations working at that time in Afghanistan submitted its recommendations in August, 1952, and advised the Government that intensive work in the field of health, education, agriculture, social, welfare, handicrafts, etc., be undertaken in the twin villages of Shewaki and Deh Yakoub situated on the banks of the Logar River, about seven miles from the capital city, Kabul.

The Government having accepted these recommendations, the programme was initiated in September, 1954. A meeting of the village elders was arranged in the village of Shewaki, with a view to assessing their needs. The village elders expressed their desire to co-operate whole heartedly with the government officials. These officials, with active assistance from the experts of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, succeeded in establishing the following basic institutions and introducing the improved practices and techniques to help the village People :

- (1) A health centre with a clinic and three maternity and child welfare centres ; environmental sanitation survey ; immunization against diseases ; and the construction of latrines, wells, drains and compost pits, etc.

- (2) An agricultural centre, including a veterinary clinic and a plant protection centre, with a view to undertaking the following operations :
- (a) Immunization of animals against contagious diseases.
  - (b) Treatment of animals for diseases and minor ailments.
  - (c) Upgrading of cattle and poultry, including castration of scrub-bulls, etc.
  - (d) Organizing sericulture demonstration centres.
  - (e) Seed cleaning programme.
  - (f) Demonstration of improved farm tools and implements, particularly scythes and seed drills.
  - (g) Control of plant diseases and pests.
  - (h) Demonstration of improved cultural practices in farming and horticulture.
- (3) Social education activities and organization of Community centres, including also the following activities :
- (a) Organizing adult literacy classes in the villages.
  - (b) Organizing Rural schools (kindergarten sections).
  - (c) Inaugurating activities for local action, such as roads, bridges, culverts, etc., and their maintenance and repair.
  - (d) Organizing community centres in the villages with provision of a reading room, library, indoor games, and outdoor games, musical entertainment through radios and gramophones.
  - (e) Opening primary schools for girls.

- (f) Introduction of gardening and crafts in primary schools for boys.
- (4) Social welfare activities, including baby-care, home economics and home-management, organizing women's welfare centres and rural recreations.
- (5) A craft centre for training the village youth and village carpenters in making furniture, etc.
- (6) A training centre for the following categories of workers for future community project blocks :
  - (a) Village level workers. The first group of 25 workers, after completing their training, is now working in Mohammad Agha Community Project block with the Near East Foundation. Another group of 30 workers is now under training.
  - (b) Community leaders (auxiliary workers for social education and adult literacy activities). First group shall be available in 1957.

Most of these activities are new to the rural areas and several of them were introduced in the country for the first time. They are gradually being accepted by the people, who are now enthusiastically co-operating with the government officials in developing them. The area under the demonstration was, therefore, extended to thirty villages in September, 1955, covering the administrative division of Bagrami in Kabul Province. However, the demonstrative project block now includes another administrative division of Charasia, increasing the total number of villages to about 60.

In March, 1956, the Government prepared a five-year programme for economic development in which community development activities were given high priority, second only to agricultural development. This policy has been approved by the National Assembly.



The government, under this policy, proposes to extend the community development projects and activities to 2,220 villages in the course of five years at a total cost of 166 million Afghanis.

The object of the Community Development programme is not only to provide ample food, clothing, shelter, health, education and recreational facilities. All these are, of course, there, but more important than this material improvement is the realization that what is required is a change in the mental outlook of the people ; instilling in them an ambition for a higher standard of living and the will and determination to work for such standards. It is conceived as an organized co-operative enterprise by the people on the one hand and the different Ministries of the Government on the other. It seeks to build up the community and the individual and to make the latter a builder, not only of his own village, but of his country as well.

## PART FIVE

### An Historical Sketch

Afghanistan has figured prominently at various times in the history of Central Asia. Few other countries compare with it as regards past history, rich archæological remains and the part played by it in the development of human thought and culture. The history of its civilization goes back at least five thousand years. It was a seat of culture at a time when Egypt and Babylonia were serving the cause of human thought and art. Balkh (Bactria of old) can boast of having been one of the great centres of ancient civilizations. It was from here that the Aryan culture found its way into India and the adjacent countries. And again it was here that Zoroaster preached his religion, which later on became the state religion of Persia for many centuries.

Situated in the heart of Asia, Afghanistan naturally became even in those ancient times the meeting ground of at least three great civilizations of the world—Aryan or Bactrian, Græco-Bactrian, and Græco-Budhist. Similarly, it was a great centre of trade and served as an entrepot of thought and merchandise between India, China and the countries of the West.

Later on in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., Islam infused new life into the country, bringing about a fundamental revolution. The ancient culture was either replaced or came completely under the influence of the new, which has remained the decisive force in Afghan life to this very day.

In the early part of the eleventh century A.D., during the Ghaznavide period, Afghanistan once more became a flourishing

centre of learning and trade. It suffered heavily at the hands of the Mughals in the 13th and 14th centuries when some of its great cities, such as Balkh, Bamian, Herat and Ghazni were literally wiped out.

• Again, in the 15th century, through the efforts of the Timurides, Herat became a great centre of culture and art. This period has rightly been called "The Renaissance of the East". The benevolent Timuride dynasty was overthrown in the beginning of the 16th century by the Safavids of Persia and the Shibanis of Trans Oxiana. Western Afghanistan was occupied by the Persians, while the eastern part came under the influence of the Mughals. This state of affairs lasted until the beginning of the 18th century.

**The Rise of the Hotakis :** Mir Vais Khan, one of the most influential chiefs, who held the office of Kalantar (Mayor), led a revolt against Gurgin, the Persian governor of Kandahar. The Persians, caught unawares could not offer effective resistance and were killed to a man (1709). Mir Vais Khan took the reins of government in his own hands without assuming the royal title. He was content to be called 'Mishr' or Chief of his people. Subsequent Persian expeditions, once 20,000 strong, failed to recapture Kandahar, and Mir Vais was left in full possession of the whole province until his death in 1715.

• Simultaneously, the Abdalis of Herat, encouraged by the success of the Hotakis at Kandahar, took up arms against the Persians, and were ultimately successful in liberating their Province. Mahmoud, Mir Vais' son and successor, was not content with the possession of Kandahar and aspired to be a great king. He resolved to plunge right into the heart of Persia and strike at the root of the effeminate Safavide Empire. In 1722, at the

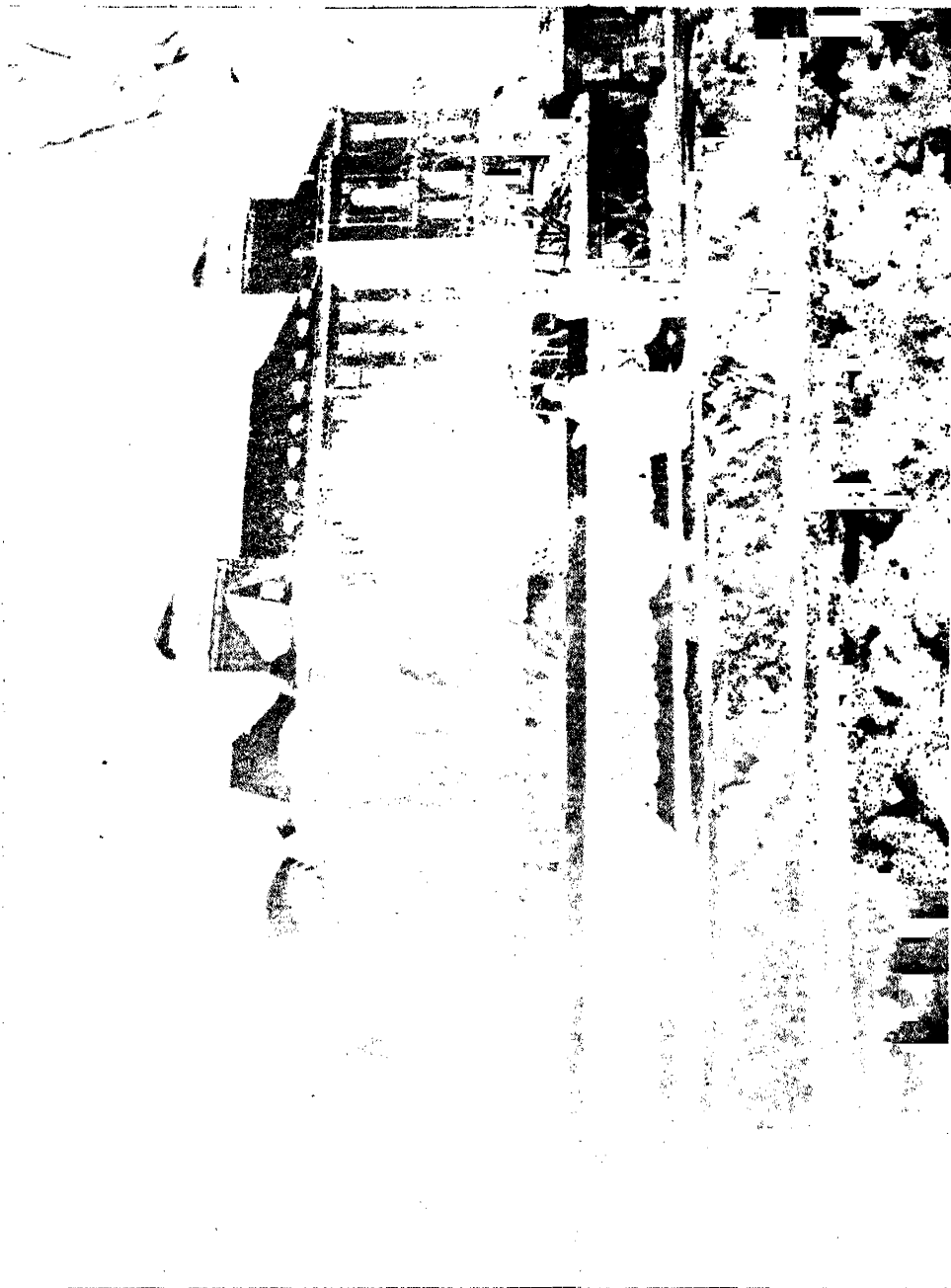
head of 20,000 men he made straight for Isfahan, the Persian capital. The degenerate Safavide government could offer no effective resistance. After a siege of six months, Shah Hussain, the last of the Safavids, came out of the city and surrendered himself to Mahmoud.

Mahmoud, in spite of his tender age, was a man of talent and energy and set himself to reorganize Persia. But he was not destined to see the fruits of his labours. He died shortly after (1725) and was succeeded by his cousin, Ashraf.

Like Mahmoud, Ashraf, too, was young and energetic, but he came to power at a very critical time. The Afghans in Persia were now threatened on all sides. The Russians were advancing from the north, while the Turks had made themselves masters of the western part of the country. Shah Ashraf was able to stop the Russian advance at Darband and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Turks who were marching on the capital. While he was thus engaged, news was brought to him that a brigand chief, Nadir Kuli Khan (who later came to be known as Nadir Shah of Persia) had attacked Tus and was on his way to take Herat. Ashraf, busy on other fronts, was greatly alarmed to learn this disquieting news. Losing no time, he collected all the troops available and hastened to the north to meet the Persians. At Damaghan, he found the Persians strongly entrenched. The Afghans, although tired and worn out by their long and tedious journey through one of the most inhospitable parts of the country, could not desist from at once attacking the enemy in their strong position. The Persians received the shock, reeled and staggered but kept their ground. The Afghans made a second assault. This, too, failed to achieve its object. Exhausted already from their long journey, they fell back in the direction of Isfahan,



A Nomad Camp, a usual sight in Afghanistan.



hotly pursued by the enemy, who gave them no time to reorganize their army (October 2, 1729). Finding their position untenable even at the capital, the Afghans departed with all the members of their families. Ashraf, with a few faithful followers, endeavoured to reach his native land *via* Seistan, but was treacherously murdered by a Baluch chief, who thereby hoped to get a reward from his enemy—Nadir Kuli. This ended the Afghan rule in Persia (1730 A.D.).

### **Nadir Shah of Persia Invades Afghanistan :**

Nadir, after consolidating his position in Persia, turned his attention to the east with a view to taking Herat. The Abdalis at this juncture were besieging Meshed. Zulfikar Khan, son of Mohammad Zaman Khan and brother of Ahmad Khan (later Ahmad Shah Durrani) appealed to Mir Hussain of Kandahar (brother of Mahmoud) for help. Saidal Khan Nasir, a Ghilzai chief of repute, was despatched to their succour. In an engagement near the Afghan border, the Afghans were able to inflict crushing defeat on the Persians. Nadir with only eighty men was cut off from the rest of his army and took shelter in a small tower. This would have been the end of the drama, but no one recognized him and the golden opportunity was allowed to slip away.

Nadir made good his escape, and on receiving reinforcements, once more took the offensive and marched on Herat. The besieged fought desperately, but dissensions in their ranks forced them to sue for peace. Nadir, impressed by the valour of the vanquished, treated them with marked clemency and tried to win them over to his side.

In 1737 Nadir once more was on the move with the object of taking Kandahar. After long preparations he came out of

Isfahan at the head of a large army, estimated at 80,000 men. At Kandahar he met stiff resistance and it was not until after a tight blockade of fully one year that he was able to take the city (March 1738).

The occupation of Kandahar brought Nadir Shah into clash with the Mughal Empire of India. After taking Kabul, then a part of the Mughal Empire, Nadir marched on India. The Mughal army came out to oppose his advance at Karnal, north of Delhi. The Indians were no match for the hardy and tough soldiers led by Nadir in person. It was all over in less than two hours. The Mughals were completely routed and had no alternative but to sue for peace (February 19, 1739).

Nadir, after a stay of a few days at the imperial capital, took possession of its treasures and jewels, including the celebrated peacock throne and then left for his native land.

On reaching Meshed he intended to make it the capital of his vast empire. He, however, did not live long to reap the fruits of his triumphs. In the spring of 1747 a conspiracy was formed and he was assassinated in his camp at Khabushan. Within a few years after his death, the mighty empire which he had created fell to pieces.



### **THE DURRANIS (Variously called Abdalis & Sadozais) :**

After the death of Nadir Shah, Ahmad Khan Abdali with his contingent of 4,000 Afghans returned to Kandahar. There in October, 1747, a tribal Jirga was held to consider the future of the country, and to elect a king of their own. Everyone of the tribal chiefs put forth his claim. So heated did the discussion and dissensions become that a recourse to arms seemed imminent. At this critical moment, Sabar, a respectable dervish, intervened on behalf of Ahmad Khan. Making a wreath of sheaves of wheat, he put it on Ahmad Khan's head and said, "May this serve you as a crown". The choice was approved by all and Ahmad Khan became the elected King of the Afghans.

**Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747-1773):** Ahmad Shah was a chief of the Sadozai clan, a branch of the Abdalis. On his accession he took the title of Dur-i-Durran (Pearl of the Age). So this family has come to be known as Abdalis, Sadozais or Durranis.

Ahmad Shah, though very young at this time (for he was hardly twenty-five) proved himself to be a capable ruler. His first object was to secure the affection of his people and to weld them into a strong nation. His popular manners, combined with his courage, activity, vigilance and other martial virtues, soon endeared him to all of his people, and he became the idol of his nation who gave him the title of 'Baba'—Father of the Nation.

Within a short space of a quarter of a century, he was not only able to liberate Afghanistan from foreign yoke, but also carried his victorious arms from Meshed to Kashmir, & Delhi, and from the Oxus to the Arabian Sea.

**Timur Shah (1773-1793):** Ahmad Shah was succeeded by his son, Timur, who lacked the energy and farsightedness of his illustrious father. It is not possible for a successor of a great king to rest upon his father's laurels and enjoy perfect tranquillity without exerting himself.

So was the case with Timur. As soon as the grip of the master hand was no more, numerous sources of danger cropped up. Timur was incapable of dealing courageously with all these difficulties. The result was that the chiefs gave him but nominal homage and the greater part of his reign was spent in quelling their uprisings. His shifting and vacillating policy and easy-going temperament brought great loss to the kingdom founded by Ahmad Shah the Great, and its real disintegration begins with Timur Shah's reign. It was Timur Shah who changed the capital of Afghanistan from Kandahar to Kabul.

**Zaman Shah (1793-1800):** After the death of Timur his fifth son, Zaman, was able to occupy the throne with the help of Sardar Payenda Khan, the influential chief of the Barakzais. Zaman Shah, from the very beginning of his reign was beset with innumerable difficulties, both external and internal. His elder brothers, Hamayun, governor of Kandahar, and Mahmoud, Governor of Herat, thinking themselves lawful heirs to the throne, took up arms to contest for power.

Zaman Shah, after consolidating his position in Afghanistan, turned to India, with the object of turning out the British. But there was too little security at home to ensure success abroad.

The British were greatly alarmed to learn of his plans. They took prompt measures for the security of their Indian territories, now threatened by Napoleon on one side and Zaman on the other. Captain Malcolm was accordingly deputed as

Envoy to Persia to induce Fatch Ali Shah Qajár to bring pressure upon Zaman Shah, and divert his attention from his threatened invasion of India to the western border of Afghanistan. The Shah went a step further. He helped Mahmoud, the ex-governor of Herat, who was granted asylum in Persia, with men and money and encouraged him to advance on Kandahar. Mahmoud, assisted by Fatch Khan, son of Payenda Khan, took Kandahar after a siege of 42 days. Emboldened by these initial successes, they pushed on towards Kabul.

Zaman Shah, who was then in India and had proceeded as far as Lahore, hurried back to retrieve his losses. But Ahmad Khan Nurzai, commander of the Royal forces, who had some personal grievances against the King, decided to join the ranks of the insurgents. Owing to this treachery the cause of Zaman Shah became almost hopeless. All was given up for lost, and the King, leaving the battle-field in dismay, fled to Kabul precipitately. He could not stay even there long and left for Peshawar with a few faithful followers. Near Jigdalik he decided to pass the night at the fort of Ashiq Khan, one of his old adherents. Ashiq turned out to be a traitor. Detaining his honourable guest, he sent a swift messenger to Kabul to inform Mahmoud and Fatch Khan of Shah's confinement. Asad Khan, a younger brother of Fatch Khan, was immediately dispatched to secure Zaman Shah and his party. The King's eyes were pierced with a lancet then and there. He was then taken to Kabul and imprisoned at Bala Hissar, where he remained till the end of Mahmoud's reign (1803).

**Shah Mahmoud (1800-1803):** Mahmoud was an incapable, selfish and indolent ruler. He took no interest in the welfare of his people; rather he squandered the treasures accumulated by his father and grandfather, and left the entire

affairs of the State in the hands of his powerful and resourceful Vizir, Fateh Khan. The minister, too, had a rival in the person of Akram Khan Alizai. The rivalries and jealousies of these two influential chiefs gave great offense to the people. There were uprisings on all sides and the King's army could not cope with the situation. Some of the chiefs, who had personal grievances against the King or his ministers, invited Shah Shuja, a full brother of Zaman Shah, to Kabul. The intrigue was successful. Shuja rode into the capital triumphantly. Mahmoud, finding that all was over, sued for peace. His life and eyes were spared, but he was taken to the Bala Hissar and cast into prison.

**Shah Shuja (1803—1809):** The new King was incapable of restoring peace and prosperity in a country torn by internal dissensions. The chiefs had become too powerful and unruly, and the outlying provinces were trying to assert their independence. The Sikhs were encroaching upon Afghan territories from the east and the Persians were threatening from the west. The Shah could not conciliate the powerful Barakzai chief, Fateh Khan. This caused the general condition of the country, already on the verge of bankruptcy and ruin, to deteriorate still further.

Napolcon of France was at this time at the zenith of his power. In 1807 he and Alexander I of Russia signed the Treaty of Tilsit. The two monarchs meditated a combined invasion of India. This once more aroused the British to efforts to recover their lost prestige at the Persian Court. They also planned to protect their Indian Empire by binding the western frontier states in a chain of friendly alliances. A mission, headed by Elphinstone, was sent to meet Shah Shuja

at Peshawar for the purpose of discussing ways and means of mutual defence against the threatened invasion of Afghanistan and India. The Mission was warmly received and resulted in the conclusion of a treaty of friendship (June 7, 1809).

•Hardly had the Mission left Peshawar when news was received that Kabul had been occupied by Mahmoud and Fateh Khan. The month of June had not come to a close before it was evident that the Shah's cause was hopeless. After a short encounter near Gandomak, Shah Shuja's forces were routed, while he, turning off, withdrew beyond the border to await a favourable opportunity.

**The Rise of the Barakzais :** Shah Shuja, after making futile efforts to recover his throne, was at last imprisoned at Peshawar and, carried off to Kashmir. In 1812, however, he was able to make good his escape. He came to Lahore hoping to get the help of Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Panjab, in regaining his lost throne. Contrary to his expectations, the Sikh ruler treated him badly and robbed him of the famous diamond, Koh-i-Noor. The fugitive monarch, after various vicissitudes, ultimately took refuge under the British at Ludhiana.

The Barakzais were now dominant throughout the country. This incited the jealousy of Kamran, Mahmoud's eldest son. He began looking for an opportunity to bring ruin upon Fateh Khan and his influential brothers. In 1816, a powerful Persian army advanced on Herat. Haji Feroz-ud-Din, the Governor, appealed to his brother, Mahmoud for help. Fateh Khan set out in that direction. The Haji was made a prisoner and sent to Kabul under a strong escort. Dost Mohammad, a younger brother of Fateh Khan, was appointed to seize the treasures. His intrusion into the princesses' quarters in search of the

treasures infuriated the sister of Kamran, wife of Prince Kasim, son of Haji Feroz-ud-Din, and she called upon her brother to avenge the insult.

Kamran, who had an outstanding grudge against the Vazir, did not fail to avail himself of the opportunity. Repairing to Herat under guise of leading reinforcement, he caught hold of Fateh Khan and immediately deprived him of his eyesight, while Dost Mohammad made good his escape to Kashmir.

Retribution immediately followed this outrage. The Vazir's brothers, some twenty in number, took up arms in every direction. The Shah asked the Vazir to write to his brothers to submit. He replied boldly that he was blind and had no control over them. Irritated and enraged by his answer, the Shah ordered the unfortunate minister, to whom he twice owed his crown, to be cut to pieces. Fateh Khan met his death heroically. He made no cry and offered no prayer for mercy, and died as he had lived—bold, dauntless and resolute. The end of the Vazir was also the death-knell of the Sadozai dynasty.

The cruel death of Fateh Khan aroused the vengeance of the powerful Barakzai brothers. The first to enter the field was Dost Mohammad. He took Peshawar and Kabul and drove the Shah and his son, Kamran, from all their possessions except Herat, where they managed to maintain a precarious footing for a few years. The remainder of Afghanistan was parcelled out among the Barakzai brothers.

In the confusion that followed, Afghanistan suffered heavily. Balkh was seized upon by the Khan of Bokhara, the trans-Indus Afghan districts were occupied by the Sikhs, and the outlying provinces of Sindh and Baluchistan assumed independence. In the partition of Afghanistan, Ghanzi, Kabul

and Jalalabad fell to the lot of Dost Mohammad Khan (1826). He thus became the most powerful of the Barakzai Sardars. Five of his half-brothers jointly ruled Kandahar.

**Dost Mohammad Khan or the Grand Amir (1826—1839):** Dost Mohammad Khan is the founder of the Barakzai or Mohammadzai dynasty, which is still in power. As soon as his position was secure at Kabul, he made up his mind to recover Peshawar. Dost Mohammad could not forget that Peshawar was an integral part of Afghanistan and that the Sikhs had occupied it during the confusion that followed the death of Vazir Fateh Khan. He resolved to *wrest* it from the Sikhs by force. Assuming the title of Amir-ul-Mominin, (the Leader of the Faithful) he declared a religious war and called upon his people to join in his expedition. At their head he advanced upon Peshawar, but the shrewd Sikh leader, finding himself too weak to meet him in open field, sowed treason and dissension in the Amir's camp. The result was that the invading army melted away and Peshawar was lost to the Amir.

In November 1837, Mohammad Shah of Persia laid siege to Herat. The Russians, anxious to have the Persians compensate themselves with Afghan territory for Russian conquests of Persian territories in the Caucasus, supported the Persians. The British, fearful that Persia was falling completely under Russian influence, determined to enter into alliances with the rulers of Herat, Kabul and Kandahar. With this view a mission was sent to Kabul under Capt. Burnes. Dost Mohammad Khan was not disinclined to welcome a power from which he expected support in his attempts to recover Peshawar. But he was unable to obtain from the envoy the assurances which he

hoped for. At the same time the appearance of a Russian agent, Capt. Vikovich, at Kabul alarmed the British and Burnes left Kabul empty-handed.

The failure of Burnes' mission gave the Governor-General of India, Lord Auckland, a pretext to invade Afghanistan, with the object of restoring Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul. Thus the First Anglo-Afghan War began at the end of 1838 with the British invasion of the country. A British army under General Keane assembled at Ferozepur. Shah Shuja was supplied with the necessary funds to raise an army of his own. As the Sikhs did not allow the British to go through their country, it was decided that the army should march along the Sutlej down to the Indus and then via Sukkur and Shikarpur and through the Bolan Pass, advance on Kandahar. In April 1839, after suffering terrible privations and heavy losses amongst their transport animals from predatory attacks of Baluchs, Kakakrs and Achakzais, Keane's army reached Kandahar, and Shah Shuja was crowned in the mosque of Ahmad Shah.

On the 27th of June the force moved northwards, and on the 21st of July, after a severe encounter, the citadel of Ghazni was carried by storm. In August, 1839, the British took Kabul and installed Shah Shuja on the throne. Dost Mohammad, finding his army thinned by treachery, fled across the Hindu Kush, and although hotly pursued, escaped to Balkh. A little later he was offered asylum by Nasrullah Khan of Bokhara, but later treacherously put in prison by him. However, the Afghans did not take kindly to the occupation of their capital by a foreign force, nor would they tolerate being governed by a sovereign who was a mere puppet of the British. Shah Shuja was supported entirely by British bayonets.



Insurrections broke out in various quarters. As soon as the flames were stamped out in one place, they broke out afresh in another.

Dost Mohammad hearing the news of the insurrections and the bold stand of his people against the British, escaped from prison and returned to Afghanistan and joined the ranks of the patriots. Fierce battles, took place at Parwandarra (now Jabalus-Seraj) and other parts of Kohistan in which the British sustained heavy losses (November 2, 1840). But soon after the battle, the Amir to the surprise of all, surrendered himself to the British at Kabul. He was then deported to India with all the members of his family.

Even after the deportation of Amir the situation did not improve. Constant outbreaks all over the country showed that the situation was growing rapidly worse. Appeals were sent to General Sale at Gandomak and General Nott at Kandahar to come to the rescue. Sale, finding that he had not sufficient transport, preferred to fall back on Jalalabad, and Nott could not advance beyond Ghazni. The British forces in Kabul, finding themselves abandoned and in a precarious position, concluded a humiliating treaty with Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mohammad Khan, on December 11, 1841, promising to quit Afghanistan without further delay and to set free Dost Mohammad. McNaughton, the British Political Officer, was not however, in a mood to carry out the terms of this agreement; instead he set about sowing dissension among the Afghan chiefs. The result was the assassination of McNaughton at the hands of Akbar Khan. A new treaty of withdrawal was made with the Afghan chiefs.

On January 6, 1842, the British force and camp-followers,

in all 16,500 men, marched out of Kabul, intending to go to Hindustan, in reality marching into the jaws of death. Bands of patriots swarmed around the line of their retreat. The British Generals lost their heads and the troops their morale. Women, children and many officers were surrendered as hostages to Akbar Khan. The rest struggled on in misery through snowstorms and constant hail of bullets. The retreat became a rout; the rout a massacre. Seven days later (on January 13) one solitary survivor, Dr. Brydon, half dead with wounds and exhaustion, staggered into Jalalabad to tell the story of the disaster to the astounded British garrison.

Lord Auckland, the man mainly responsible for this sad episode, laid down the reins of office and was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough. As soon as the new Governor-General arrived in India, he announced that the British Government would no longer imperil its armies, and with its armies, the Indian Empire. He determined on the immediate evacuation of Afghanistan without any attempt at reprisals or even the rescue of prisoners still in the hands of the Afghans. Nott was ordered to abandon Kandahar, while Pollock and Sale were instructed to withdraw to Peshawar. The Governor-General met the retreating troops with great pomp and show in a big camp at Ferozepore, decorated with triumphal arches. Dost Mohammad Khan was released. He hastily returned to his country, now without a ruler, for the ill-fated Shah Shuja was murdered by his own subjects a few days after the British garrison abandoned the capital.

Thus ended the final phase of the First Afghan War. It cost the British 20,000 lives and the waste of more than £20,000,000. Nearly all British historians agree that the war had been an unjust one. Typical is this observation, "We plunged into a most

unrighteous war beyond the boundaries of India, shedding the blood, and interfering with the independence of a people with whom we had not a pretext of quarrel.....The terrible Afghan expedition made an indelible impression on the minds of the Afghans. It is certainly true that so far as the military honour and reputation of England is concerned, these were speedily reasserted and vindicated, but it was impossible for the Indian Government to win the confidence of the Afghans”.

Dost Mohammad reigned till 1863, and during these twenty years he was able to establish peace throughout the country. He died at Herat, thirteen days after the capture of the city, and was succeeded by his third son, Sher Ali Khan.

**Amir Sher Ali Khan:** His elder brothers, Afzal Khan and Azam Khan, rose against him and for five years the Amir led a life of extraordinary vicissitude—now an outcast flying for his life, now a ruler in a solitary outlying province, now the *de facto* ruler of the greater part of the country. At last, in 1868, he was able to establish his authority throughout Afghanistan.

The British, meanwhile, in pursuance of their Forward Policy, were moving slowly ahead into the tribal area bordering Afghanistan. Advocates of this policy wished to see Afghanistan absorbed within the British Indian Empire. In 1874, the Forward Policy gained the upper hand, and a series of negotiations with Sher Ali Khan ensued during the following years. Finally, when the British saw that they could not achieve their object by peaceful means, they resorted to force and declared war on the Amir. Late in 1878, the British once more invaded Afghanistan. This was the beginning of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1881).

**The Second Afghan War :** A large force was mobilized for the invasion of Afghanistan. On November 21, 1878, the three great passes leading into Afghanistan were entered by the British armies. Sir Samuel Browne threatened the Khyber, and Major-General Roberts marched up the Kurram Valley. The southernmost invading force under General Stewart marched from Quetta through the Bolan Pass upon Kandahar. The forces met stiff resistance on all fronts, but by the end of December, Browne had reached Jalalabad, Roberts fought his way through the Shuttargardan Pass, and in January Stewart entered Kandahar. Sher Ali, leaving his son Yakoub Khan, as regent in Kabul, went to Mazar-i-Sharif, hoping to get help from the Russians. But the Russians advised him to make his peace with the British. The Amir, worn out by physical diseases and mental worries, died at Mazar on February 21, 1879.

**The Treaty of Gandomak :** By the Treaty of Gandomak (May 26) Yakoub Khan agreed to receive a permanent British Embassy with a suitable escort at Kabul ; to conduct his foreign relations with other States in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British government ; and to allow such rectification of the frontier as was demanded by the advocates of the Forward Policy. In return, the Amir was promised help against external aggression.

The news of the conclusion of peace was received with much satisfaction in England, and the Government congratulated itself and the country on the attainment of a "Scientific Frontier". Prime Minister Beaconsfield wrote to the Viceroy : "Greatly owing to your energy and foresight we have secured a scientific frontier for our Indian Empire". Sir John Lawrence's warnings were ignored. The advocates of the Forward Policy triumphed ;

the Indian frontier was to rest not upon the Indus but upon the command of the passes.

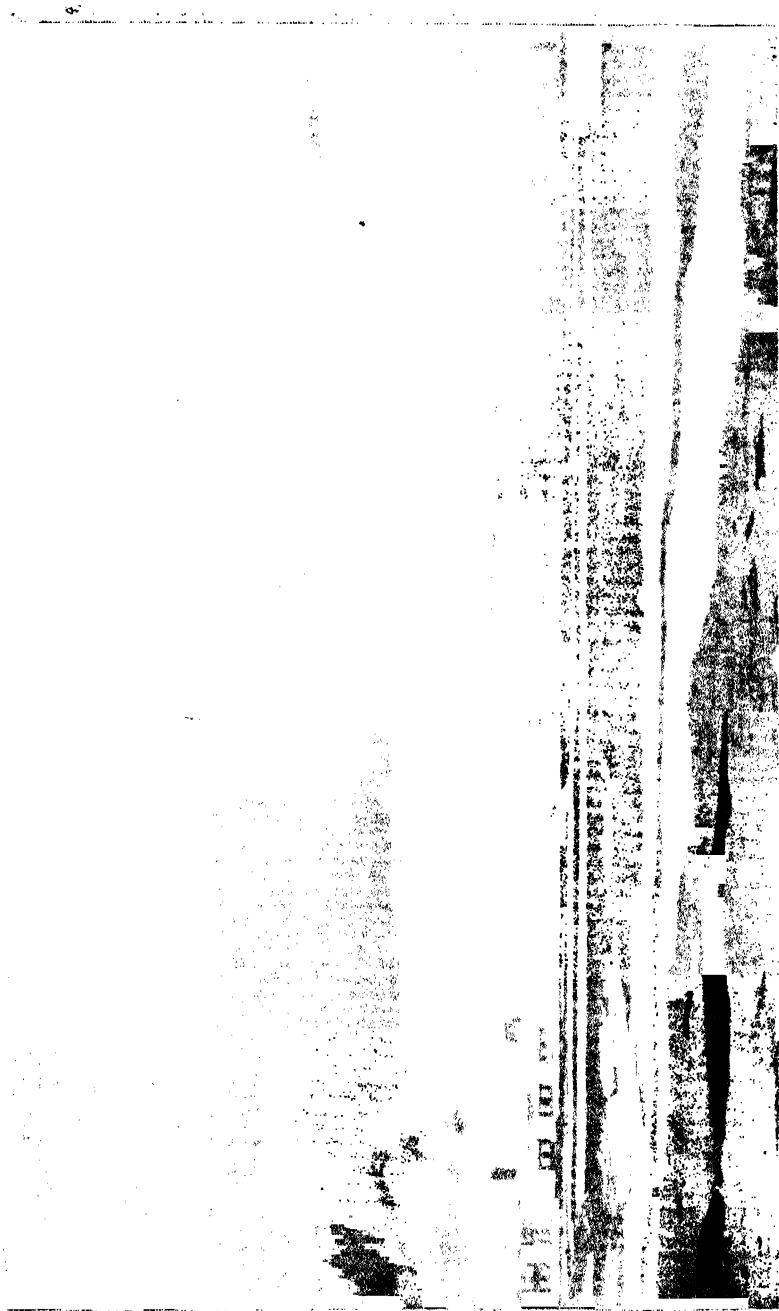
The triumph was short-lived. The Indian Government once more, by painful experience, had to learn the lesson that the moment any ruler of Afghanistan is supported by any foreign power, he forfeits all the respect and allegiance of his fellow countrymen. How blind the Viceroy was to the real state of affairs may be seen from his statement that "the Afghans will like and respect us all the more for the thrashing we have given Sher Ali". A month after these words were written, the clouds were ominously gathering and the fate of Burnes and McNaughten awaited Sir Louis Cavagnari, who had entered Kabul as British Resident on July 24, 1879. On September 2, Cavagnari sent a telegram to the Viceroy containing the words: "All well". The next day the envoy and the whole of his escort were murdered in the Bala-Hissar. The jubilation with which Beaconsfield and Lytton regarded their handiwork was rudely disturbed. "The web of policy", wrote the Viceroy, "so carefully and patiently woven, had been rudely shattered". British forces were once again in motion and before the close of October, General Roberts was able to occupy Kabul. Yakoub Khan abdicated and was sent to India, where he resided until his death in 1923.

Roberts' position in Kabul was far from secure. The Afghan People had once again risen in arms against the foreign invaders, led by different tribal leaders. In winter, there was fierce fighting in and around Kabul, and it was with great difficulty that Roberts kept his communications with India open. Indeed, for ten days, December 14 to 24, he was forced to abandon Kabul and the Bala-Hissar, and retire within the defences of Sherpur where he was besieged by 100,000 nationalist forces. To hold Afghanistan permanently was now out of the question. Lord

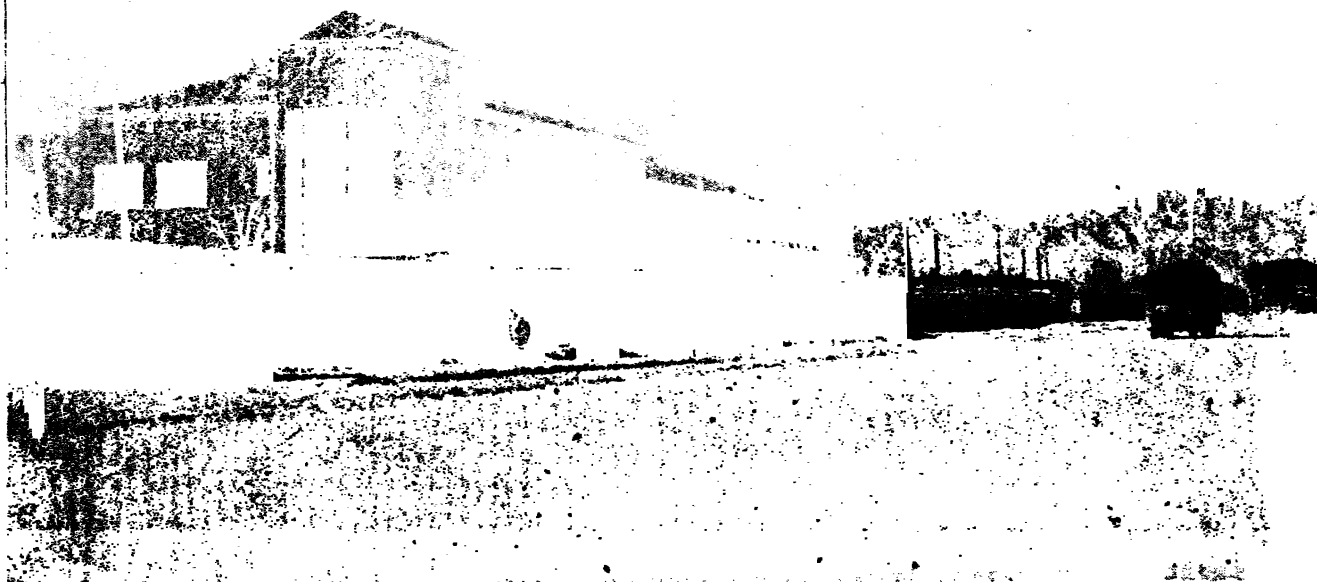
Lytton, therefore, deemed it advisable to break up the country into small principalities governed by British puppets. Kandahar was promised to Vali Sher Ali, a Barakzai of Kandahar. No special arrangements were necessary for Herat, where Ayoub Khan, full brother of Yakoub Khan, still maintained himself in power. It was decided to retain Kabul under direct British administration.

Opportunely, there now appeared upon the scene the strong man so badly needed. It was a grandson of Dost Mohammad, Abdur Rahman. Since 1868, he had lived in banishment beyond the Oxus, under Russian protection. He no sooner reappeared than the patriots rallied around him. At this time Lord Lytton resigned his office and the Conservative Government suffered a severe defeat in the general elections. Gladstone succeeded Lord Beaconsfield as Prime Minister and Lord Ripon was sent out as Viceroy to bring about a peaceful settlement of the Afghan question. Abdur Rahman Khan was finally recognized as Amir of Kabul and Great Britain bound herself not to require the admission of an English Resident anywhere in Afghanistan. Abdur Rahman succeeded to a much reduced kingdom. Herat was under the control of Ayoub Khan, while Kandahar was ruled by Vali Sher Ali, a British puppet.

**The Battle of Maiwand :** Ayoub Khan, declaring a religious war, came out of Herat with the intention of driving the British out of Afghanistan. At Maiwand, on the 27th of July, 1880, he met and defeated a British force led by General Burrows, which had been sent to check his advance. This was as the British themselves have admitted, "One of the most notable victories ever gained by oriental troops in conflict with a European army". The British had 914 men killed and were driven back in full retreat.



Ali Abad Medical College, Science Faculty and the tomb of Sayed  
Jamal-ud-Din Afghani.



**The central office of the Afghan Karakul Company, Kabul**



Ayoub Khan, after the victory, marched on to invest Kandahar. On receiving the news, the British evacuated Kabul, and Roberts with 10,000 picked men started for Kandahar. On 31st August, Ayoub Khan was attacked and defeated at Baba Wali.

The course of events had made it quite clear that the partition of Afghanistan, as already planned, was not possible and that Vali Sher Ali could not maintain himself at Kandahar. The Government of India, therefore, was obliged to recognise the Kandahar province as an integral Part of Abdur Rahman's Kingdom. The city was finally evacuated and formally made over to a governor deputed from Kabul in April, 1881.

For a time Abdur Rahman Khan seemed in imminent danger of losing not only Kandahar but Kabul as well. Ayoub Khan marched again from Herat, occupied Kandahar and held it for several months. Abdur Rahman set out from Kabul to offer him battle. Few thought that he could prevail, but he won a complete victory near Kandahar. Ayoub Khan fled into exile to Persia. Herat as well as Kandahar fell to the victor.

The Amir with great energy and determination then set about establishing peace and a strong central government in Afghanistan. In this he succeeded marvellously. On November 12, 1893, the Amir was forced under threat of war to relinquish his rights over the border tribes and to accept a new line of demarcation, the so-called "Durand Line".

Amir Abdur Rahman Khan died in October 1901, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Habibullah Khan, who ruled from 1901 to 1919.

**Amir Habibullah Khan :** Amir Habibullah Khan was an enlightened monarch. He laid the foundation of Habibia College and followed an "Open door" policy. Roads were constructed

and steps were taken to introduce machinery and other modern conveniences, such as hydro-electricity and water pipes into Afghanistan. A weekly paper, Sirajul Akhbar, was started, and it was entrusted to the well-known Afghan writer, Mahmud-i-Tarzi. This paper infused a new life throughout the country and had a great part in the national awakening. European games, including football, hockey, cricket, tennis and badminton were also encouraged and the Amir personally took part in some of them, distributing prizes among the winners.

In 1907, the Amir visited India at the invitation of the British Indian Government. He observed strict neutrality in World War I. A German-Turkish Mission reached Kabul in October, 1915, to try to induce the Amir to declare a holy war against the British, but the Amir was able to stick to his neutrality throughout the War. In February 1919, feeling that the time had come when he might claim the reward of his steadfastness during the war, and to vindicate his policy before his people, he wrote to the Viceroy, demanding written recognition by the Peace Conference of Afghanistan's "absolute liberty, freedom of action and perpetual independence". But on the night of the 20th of February, he was assassinated in his shooting camp at Kala-gosh in the Laghman Valley. His younger brother, Sardar Nasrulla, Khan, who was then at Jalalabad, proclaimed himself King. Meanwhile in Kabul, Sardar Amanullah Khan, the third son of the Amir, took possession of the citadel. On the 29th of February he proclaimed himself King of Afghanistan in the presence of all civil and military officials in Kabul. The army in Jalalabad rallied around the cause of Amanullah and forced Nasrullah Khan, to abdicate.

**King Amanullah :** Amanullah's first act after accession was to proclaim the independence of Afghanistan both in

external and internal affairs. On March 3, 1919, he informed the Viceroy of his accession, and at the same time asked for a revision of treaties. "Our independent and free Government" he wrote, "considers itself ready, at every time and season, to conclude such agreements and treaties with the British Government as may be useful and serviceable to our Government and yours".

On receiving an unencouraging answer from the Viceroy, Amanullah sent his forces to the eastern and southern borders, and adopted every precautionary measure. The strength of the British and Indian forces stationed north of the Indus at this juncture aggregated 340,000 men and 185,000 animals, besides airplanes, mechanized units and all means of modern warfare. Afghanistan at this time was divided into ten military districts. Its effectives were nominally 38,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry and 4,000 artillerymen. They were badly trained and poorly equipped with obsolete guns and rifles.

### **The War of Independence or the Third Anglo-Afghan War :**

On May 3, shots were exchanged between the British force and Afghan soldiers at the mouth of the Khyber Pass, and from this hostilities began on all three fronts.

This war, generally known as the Afghan War of Independence lasted for nearly a month. The operations on the eastern front were not successful and the British captured the frontier post of Dakka, while the advance of the Afghan forces under the leadership of general Nadir Khan (late king Nadir Shah) into the Kurram Valley and Waziristan and his victory at Thal and the subsequent rising of the border tribes against the British scored for Afghanistan a decisive victory. An armistice was signed by

which the British recognized the independence of Afghanistan. At the invitation of the British Government a delegation, under the leadership of Mahmud Tarzi (Foreign Minister), was sent to India to negotiate for peace and a treaty of friendship. This treaty was finally ratified in Kabul in 1922. Meanwhile Amanullah succeeded in establishing diplomatic relations for Afghanistan with the outside world. Russia recognized the independent Government of the country and was soon followed by Afghanistan's other neighbours, later to be joined by the countries of Europe.

Having achieved this goal, Amanullah started to introduce reforms inside the country and to prepare his people to meet requirements of a modern international life, not only with the countries of Asia, but also with the Western World. This movement in Afghanistan resulted in invitations being extended to the King to visit several European countries. By the time Amanullah returned from Europe, the impression of all he had seen there had quite obliterated his preconceived ideas and made him eager to introduce the western way of life with revolutionary swiftness into his own country. Afghanistan, in spite of some political designs originating outside the country, was once more becoming a strong power in Central Asia.

Although the King's reforms met with opposition from a certain group of reactionaries who were rigidly and conservatively against the modernization of the country, this opposition was confined to one section of the population only which, though vociferous, was not strong enough to maintain its stand. The fierce civil war which broke out in the country and later resulted in the abdication of King Amanullah and his departure from the country had its real cause not, as the misrepresentations of some writers have tried to prove, in the reluctance of the Afghan

people to see their country develop along modern lines, but rather in the political manoeuvring of outside elements.

During the ensuing period of almost one full year of civil wars the throne of Kabul witnessed one of the most dramatic events of all time when a highwayman named Habibullah seized the power and declared himself King. Thus, among other destructive results of the civil wars, most of Afghanistan's political leaders were killed, banished or imprisoned.

At this time Sardar Mohammad Nadir was in Paris where he had been sent as Afghan Minister some time after his promotion to the rank of Marshal and Minister of War in the first Cabinet of independent Afghanistan. Hearing the news from home, he left France and returned in haste to Afghanistan, where the people found in him the leader they needed to deliver the country from its miserable domination by the bandit-king.

On 25th January, 1929, Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan, accompanied by his brothers, Sardar Mohammad Hashim Khan and Sardar Shah Wali Khan, left for Afghanistan. Sardar Shah Mahmoud Khan, their younger brother, who was then in Kabul, went to meet them at the Afghan border. The three had a long talk, whercin Sardar Shah Mahmoud give all details of the revolt, with its attendant horrors.

From March until October 1929, the struggle for deliverance continued, the brothers playing an important part in this drama. Routed again and again, they ever rose with fresh hearts from the disaster, till at last on October 16, their efforts were crowned with success. The bandit-king was driven out of the capital, and peace was restored. The warm welcome which Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan received at Kabul was never excelled by that accorded to a triumphant Cæsar. Thousands of people from all parts of the country had lined

both sides of the route. They went wild with enthusiasm and delight at the sight of their deliverer. Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan was obviously moved by the extraordinary warmth of the greetings and kept his hand raised in continuous salute, bowing to each side as he rode through the streets of Kabul.

In a Jirga held at Salamkhana, Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan was unanimously elected King.

**King Mohammad Nadir Shah :** King Mohammad Nadir Shah, the second son of Sardar Mohammad Yousuf Khan was born on April 9, 1883. In him were united the two royal houses of Mohammadzais and Sadozais. On his father's side he was the great grandson of Sardar Sultan Mohammad Khan, brother of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Mohammadzai dynasty, and from his mother's side he descended from Ahmad Shah Abdali (1747—73), founder of modern Afghanistan.

During the reign of Amir Habibullah Khan, Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan and the members of his family, all men of great ability and exceptional administrative capacity, did their best for the advancement of the country. The family continued to serve Afghanistan during the early days of Amanullah Khan, and never willingly withdrew its co-operation. It was due to their heroic actions in the Third Anglo-Afghan War that the country gained its independence.

The first aim of the King upon his succession was to restore peace and order. At the age of 47, he embarked on a task that might have daunted the bravest and wisest of diplomats. Probably nowhere in history do we find a sovereign so financially handicapped at the start. It was probably the first case of a national exchequer being absolutely bankrupt, unlined even with a single silver coin. In spite of all these obstacles, King Nadir Shah applied himself at once to the task that lay before

him, and energetically took in hand the development and reform—in fact, one may say the foundation anew of Afghanistan. The constitutional reforms introduced by the King must be regarded as his most praiseworthy act, a measure by which he parted with his autocratic powers, and officially transferred them to the representatives of the people. The Afghan Government, until the reign of King Nadir Shah, was autocratic. The King was the fountain-head of all power, and all orders relating to the administration of the State emanated from him. The Ministers were practically the lieutenants of the king and in his name wielded the full authority of the government. Under King Nadir Shah, however, the Government gave way to constitutionalism. Two Houses of Parliament, a House of Representatives and a House of Elders were set up to look after the affairs of the country and to frame laws.

Unfortunately, the reign of this benign and wise King was cut short by his assassination on November 8, 1933.

### **King Mohammad Zahir Shah :**

H.M. King Mohammad Zahir Shah, the only surviving son of the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah, peacefully succeeded his father on the throne, with the title of “Almutawakkal-Allallah” (He who puts his trust in the Lord).

His Majesty was born in Kabul on Monday, October 15, 1914, so he was only 19 when he ascended the throne. He is the first Afghan King who has been educated in a European country. On the completion of his elementary education, he accompanied his illustrious father to France in 1924 and stayed there for six years. He studied at Lycee Janson de Sailly and then at Lycee Michelet and the College de Montpellier.

Returning to Afghanistan in 1930, he attended the

Officers' Military Course, where he gave sufficient proof of his great mental powers. He was asked to work in different departments of public affairs, where he soon won the esteem and affection of those who came in contact with him. During the absence of Sardar Shah Mahmūd Khan, he officiated as the Minister of Defence, and then was asked to head the Ministry of Education, which post he successfully held until the tragic death of his father.

On the very day of his accession, the King declared that he would scrupulously follow in the footsteps of his father and fulfil his programme. He takes a keen interest in every public affair and has never relinquished his efforts to improve the condition of his subjects, to diffuse knowledge, to promote agriculture and develop the natural resources of the country.

Thanks to the ability and high principles, and the administrative experience of his uncles and cousins, a slow but steady progress is being made in every direction. The present government, under the direction of Sardar Mohammad Daoud, the Prime Minister\*, is working on vast plans for the educational, industrial and agricultural development of the country, and public welfare generally. A Five Year Plan envisages the construction of better roads, better means of transportation and communication and the development of mines, industry, education and agriculture. To implement these extensive projects, the Government has availed itself of the technical and financial assistance of foreign organizations and institutions as well.

\*Since 1929, Afghanistan has had three Prime Ministers :—

- (1) H.R.H. Sardar Mohammad Hashim Khan, 1929 to 1946
- (2) H.R.H. Sardar Shah Mahmūd Khan, 1946 to 1953
- (3) H.R.H. Sardar Mohammad Daoud, from 1953



## TABLES OF REIGNING FAMILIES SINCE THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

### (1) **The Hotakis :**

|                                                                  |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Mir Vais Khan, King of Kandahar                                  | ... 1709—1715 |
| Mir Abdul Aziz, Mir Vais Khan's brother,<br>King of Kandahar     | ... 1715—1716 |
| Mir Mahmoud, Mir Vais Khan's son, King of<br>Kandahar and Persia | ... 1716—1725 |
| Mir Ashraf, son of Mir Abdul Aziz, King of<br>Persia             | ... 1725—1730 |
| Mir Hussain, son of Mir Vais Khan, King of<br>Kandahar           | ... 1725—1738 |

### (2) **The Durranis (Sadozais or Abdalis) :**

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Ahmad Shah                    | ... 1747—1773 |
| Timur Shah, son of Ahmad Shah | ... 1773—1793 |
| Zaman Shah, son of Timur Shah | ... 1793—1800 |
| Mahmoud, son of Timur Shah    | ... 1800—1803 |
| Shuja, son of Timur Shah      | ... 1803—1809 |
| Mahmoud (again)               | ... 1809—1818 |
| Civil War                     | ... 1818—1826 |

### (3) **A. The Mohammadzais (or Barakzais) .**

(Dost Mohammad's Family)

|                                                            |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Amir Dost Mohammad Khan                                    | ... 1826—1839 |
| Shah Shuja Sadozai, placed on the throne by<br>the British | ... 1839—1842 |
| Anarchy                                                    | ... 1842—1843 |
| Dost Mohammad Khan (again)                                 | ... 1843—1863 |
| Sher Ali Khan, son of Dost Mohammad                        | ... 1863—1866 |

|                                      |     |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| Afzal Khan, son of Dost Mohammad     | ... | 1866—1867 |
| Azam Khan, son of Dost Mohammad      | ... | 1867—1868 |
| Sher Ali Khan (again)                | ... | 1868—1879 |
| Yakoub Khan, son of Sher Ali         | ... | 1879—1879 |
| Abdur Rahman, son of Afzal Khan      | ... | 1880—1901 |
| Habibullah Khan, son of Abdur Rahman | ... | 1901—1919 |
| Amanullah Khan, son of Habibullah    | ... | 1919—1929 |

(3) **B. The Mohammadzais**

(Sultan Mohammad Khan's Family) :

|                                   |     |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| The Late King Mohammad Nadir Shah |     |           |
| Shahid                            | ... | 1929—1933 |
| H.M. King Mohammad Zahir Shah     | ... | 1933—     |

## PART SIX

**Information for Visitors**

**Passport & Visas :—**Every passenger intending to visit Afghanistan must be in possession of a valid passport issued by his own government and properly endorsed by one of the Afghan diplomatic representatives stationed abroad. It is advisable to apply for an Afghan visa some time in advance. The fee charged for such visas is exactly the same as levied by the government of his own country for endorsing a similar Afghan passport.

Visitors are required to show their passports at all frontier posts of the country, both on their arrival and departure. On arrival in one of the cities they should at once proceed to the Police Station to get their names registered and obtain Residential Permits (Waraqa-i-Aqamat). If a visitor whose passport has been endorsed wishes to extend the length of his stay in the country, or to set up in any business or profession, he must ask for the permission of the Afghan Government. A foreign visitor is not at liberty to enter any employment, paid or unpaid, without such permission. If a passport is lost after entering the country, the visitor must inform the police immediately. Prior to departure from Afghanistan, an exit visa must be obtained from the office issuing Residential Permits.

**Customs :—**The personal baggage and other belongings of all persons arriving in Afghanistan, whether in transit or otherwise, are subject to Customs examination. The responsibility for opening, unpacking, and repacking the packages rests with the passenger or his agent. All articles, whether they have been worn or used or not, and however small the quantity may be, must be declared to the Customs Officers. Failure to make a

proper declaration, or an attempt to conceal an article, may involve heavy penalties, including forfeiture of the goods. Import duty will not normally be charged on personal effects which have been in the possession and use of the visitor for a considerable time. The importation of certain goods, *e. g.*, dangerous drugs, poisons, opium, morphine, cocaine, liquors and other intoxicants and anything injurious for human health, is strictly prohibited. No prohibited article, however small the quantity, will be permitted to be imported. Similarly, the import of such books, newspapers, printed or written articles, nude or immoral pictures, photographs and postcards that may be the cause of unrest and disturbance in the country or against the accepted dictates of Islam and approved morals of the people, is strictly prohibited. Merchandise, or any other goods other than *bona-fide* private effects, must not be imported as passengers' goods.

The export of many articles, such as (1) livestock—horses, sheep, camels, cows, etc., (2) gold or silver and precious stones, (3) all kinds of antiques, and (4) foodstuffs (cereals) is strictly prohibited.

As this does not exhaust the list, it is advisable that before arrival or departure from Afghanistan the visitor make perfectly sure that he does not take with him anything which is prohibited. In the first case he should consult the Afghan Trade Agents stationed abroad, and in the second he should approach the Ministry of Trade & Commerce.

For more detailed information on Customs Regulations application should be made to the above Ministry.

**Currency Regulations:**—Travellers entering Afghanistan may bring in :—

- (a) Currency notes to the value of 500 Afghanis. Any note in excess of this sum should be shown at the frontier

and certified. They should take particular care to state exactly the amounts of currency in their possession; false declaration may lead to heavy penalties.

- (b) Traveller's cheques, letters of credit, etc., in any currency and up to any amount.

Travellers leaving Afghanistan may take out :—

- (a) Not more than 500 Afghanis in notes.
- (b) The equivalent of 500 Afghanis in foreign currency, unless he produces the required certificate from the authorities concerned. If travellers who are about to leave Afghanistan have excess amounts of currency or are in any doubt as to the amounts they will be allowed to take with them, they are advised to consult D' Afghanistan Bank.

**Warning :—**In their own interest travellers should make sure that they do not arrive at the place of entry or departure with excess currency, since the excess cannot be deposited with the Customs Officer, but will be taken from the traveller and is not likely to be refunded.

**When to Travel :—**Everyone who intends visiting Afghanistan should first seek information as to the best time of the year to spend in the country, and what arrangements to make. It is rather difficult to say which season to choose. If a stay of five or six months is to be made, June is the best season for the journey. If he wants to stay for a month or two, he had better visit the country during autumn, which is the fruit season. Generally speaking, spring, summer, and autumn are the times to visit Afghanistan, and it is hard to say which one is the best. Spring commences towards the end of March, officially on the first of Hamal (21st March), but April and even the first few

days of May can be wet and cold. May and early June are delightful, but towards the end of June the valleys get rather warm, and it is well then to move higher into the hills. Spring gives you the new blossoms and the low snow, which enhances the landscape so much ; but autumn gives the wonderful glory of changing leaf, with a background of newly fallen snow on the neighbouring hills. Even winter has its own charms, specially for those who are fond of skiing and skating.

Since the country is composed of lowlands and highlands, one may follow the climate of one's choice simply by going higher as the summer advances, and then gradually descending as do the shepherds and their flocks, following the melting snow upwards, until in the autumn the new snow drives them down again. It is, fascinating thus to follow spring from the valleys into hills, to be always level with the first new blossoms, until at last, you come up to the passes, the winter ever clearing before you, and a rich carpet of mountain flowers ever about your feet—wild flowers that have gone from the places where you camped only a fortnight earlier.

### **Transportation and Communications :**

At present there are no railways and navigable waterways in Afghanistan. There are about 5,000 miles of motorable roads, but these are inadequate to meet the growing needs of the country. The burden of transportation falls upon motors, lorries, trucks and pack animals.

There is a regular Postal Service throughout the country and even up to Peshawar and New Chaman. A limited number of passengers can travel by these buses. Taxis are also available. The Government of Afghanistan has recently established a Department of Civil Aviation—the Aryana Airlines—providing a passenger and air mail service between the capital and a number of

provincial towns, as well as Bahrein, Beirut, Tehran and New Delhi and Karachi. Besides, there are some foreign air lines which come at regular intervals to Kabul and Kandahar. The Indian Airlines Corporation operates a weekly flight from New Delhi to Kabul. The Iranian Airways operates a weekly service between Kabul and Tehran. Pakistan International Airlines operate twice between Kabul and Karachi.

The Government of Afghanistan is interested in establishing an international airport at Kandahar, which lies at the cross-roads between the East and West. The Royal Afghan-United States project to develop civil aviation in this country will bring nearly fifteen million dollars worth of technical aid, airplanes, equipment, and airfield construction at Kandahar and five or more other points. The following benefits are envisaged from this project :

- (1) A national system of air transport.
- (2) An international transit-stop at Kandahar, shortening world travel time by at least two hours.
- (3) The foundation for a new tourist industry.
- (4) Careers for hundreds of Afghans in aviation.
- (5) New export markets for Afghan products.

#### **Why to Travel :—**

Afghanistan has been termed by some writers the "Switzerland of Asia". It has for ages past attracted those seeking a resort which, while, affording every variety of pleasure and sport, abounds in the sublime beauties of nature. Everything that can make life enjoyable to different tastes and interests is provided here in an ideal and bracing climate. The poet will find inspiration and the artist undreamed beauties of colour and scenery for his brush. For the sportsman there is a large variety

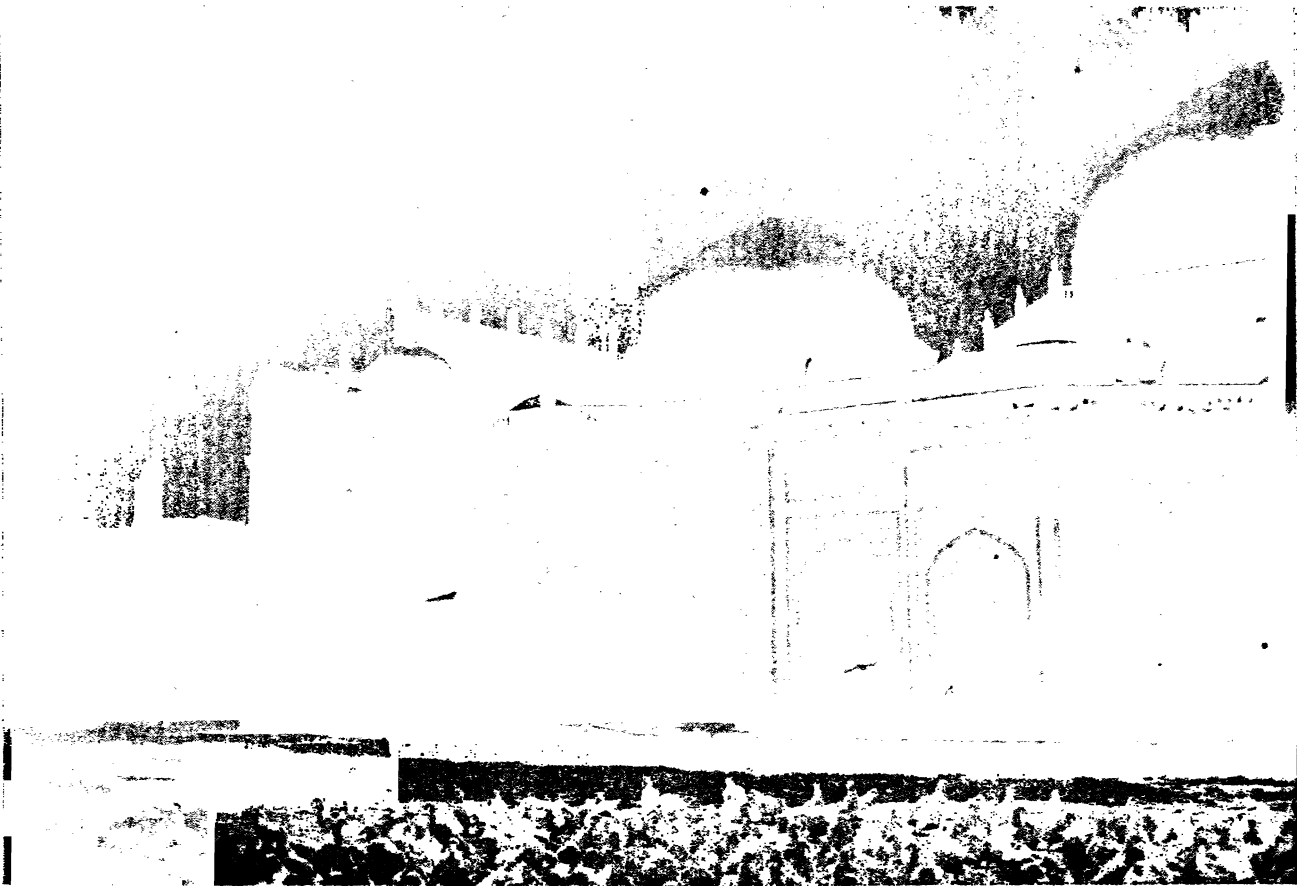
of big and small game, and for the angler there are streams abounding in fish and trout.

Afghanistan is very important from the point of archæology. For students of ancient history, there is much to be seen in the remains of Balkh, Bamian, Hadda, and Bagram souvenirs of the palmy days of the Græco-Budhist civilization. Of these, Bamian is the most interesting of all. Here the visitor can examine the colossal idols carved on the hillsides. The French Archæological Mission in Afghanistan, during the last three decades, has done some excellent work and has been able to discover some Buddhist, Indo-Hellenic, Græco-Buddhic and Brahmanic temples, coins, idols, and paintings, which vie with the remarkable discoveries of the same kind in India and Pakistan. Numerous specimens of fine art now decorate the Kabul Museum. These discoveries are of the first order and have aroused great interest in Afghanistan as well as in foreign countries.

Afghanistan is also a promising field of investigation for the student of comparative philology, who may here hope to come across the last of the little known and dying Indo-European languages, which are spoken in some of the mountain fastnesses even to this day. Here he can also conduct research in the very ancient Aryan languages, which are still preserved to a considerable extent in their original form and purity by many of the isolated hill-tribes, and the study of which might throw some light on the general history of the Indo-European languages.

**Clothing** :—If the visitor intends to visit the country during summer, clothing of medium thickness will do. If it is winter, he must have sufficient woollen clothes with him. Besides, it is advisable to have a fine pair of tinted glasses to prevent the dazzling light of snow from harming the eyes, a good





The famous Shrine of Mazar-i-Sharif supposed  
Hazrat Ali, the fourth Caliph and son-in-law

be the last resting place of  
the Prophet Mohammed.



A flute player and a keen listener.

overcoat, a waterproof sheet for bedding, and a pair of good gloves and rubber boots.

### **Rates, Prices and Wages :—**

It is not easy to dogmatize on the subject of prices, which are subject to market fluctuations, and what is now written may be out of date in a couple of months. Generally speaking, Afghanistan is less expensive than most of the neighbouring countries; the fruit of the country especially is a boon to the tourist. All kinds of fine fruits, such as apples, pomegranates, peaches, grapes, pears, melons, etc., are to be had at extremely low prices.

**Rent :—**For a six-room house in a nice locality of the capital the rent is usually 3,000 to 4,000 Afghanis per month. Servants' wages per month from 500 to 700 Afghanis plus food. Cook's wages per month from 600 to 800 Afghanis plus food.

### **Fares :—**

Cars : about 5 Afghanis per mile.

Postal Service Bus Seat : Nearly 40 Afghanis per 100 miles.

### **Where to stay :**

In addition to private hotels, serais and tea-houses, there are well-kept Government owned Rest Houses in all the important cities, towns and at various stages along the motor roads. The chief Government Rest Houses are located at the following places :

Jalalabad, Sarobi, Ghazni, Mukur, Bamian, Doab-i-Mekh-i-Zarin, Mazar-i-Sharif, Pul-i-Khumri, Kalat-i-Ghilzai, Kandahar, Girishk, Farah, Herat, Khanabad, Maimanah, Deh-Nao, and Bala-Murghab. Kabul has a fine up-to-date hotel, called L'Hôtel de Kabul, where both eastern and western dishes are served.

## PART SEVEN

**Journeys Through Afghanistan**

**Routes to Afghanistan :** There are two important routes for vehicles from the east into Afghanistan : (1) From Peshawar to Kabul *via* the Khyber Pass, and (2) from Chaman to Kandahar.

(1) From Peshawar to Kabul *via* Khyber, Jalalabad and the Lataband Pass is a distance of 181 miles. It is the most commonly used route. Under normal conditions, the journey can easily be accomplished by car in a day, while by lorry or bus it usually takes a day and a half. The halt at night is made at one of the Rest Houses *en route*, either at Jalalabad or at Sarobi. During winter it is better to stay at Jalalabad which has a milder climate, while in summer Sarobi is better.

Peshawar, the first starting point, is a big frontier town, lying on the North-Western Railway, at an elevation of 1,170 feet above sea-level. Regular Afghan mail buses are available for this journey three times a week. They start early in the morning from the Afghan Buildings (Pashtunkot) in Kissakhani Bazaar, Peshawar City. It is better to get seats booked a few days in advance to avoid disappointment. Seats can also be arranged for telegraphically or by sending money orders in advance.

Peshawar to the Afghan Border (distance  $34\frac{1}{2}$  miles) : The road is level for the first nine or ten miles. At Jamrud (nine miles from Peshawar) lying at the gate of the time-honoured Khyber Pass, the traveller has to stop to comply with the customs regulations. He has to submit his luggage to a thorough scrutiny. Prohibited articles are held up by the authorities. A toll of Re. 1/- per head is charged adults.

Two miles ahead the Khyber Pass begins, and there is an ascent through a narrow and difficult gorge, which at some places narrows to 150 yards, with steep and precipitous cliffs overhanging on either side. After Ali Masjid, the valley widens a little, but the upward trend of the road continues until Landi-Kotal, (3,370 feet) is reached. The whole of this distance presents a *zig zag* course between two series of barren mountains running roughly parallel to each other. From Landi-Kotal onwards a winding steep slope begins, which ends at Landi Khana. Here the visitor has to present his passport personally to the border officer.

The Afghan frontier post facing Landi Khana is Torkham, half a mile ahead. Here passports are examined by an Afghan official called Mamoor-i-Passport. After traversing seven miles of level road, encompassed by rocky hills, Dakka is reached. Here the visitor has to stop to get his passport checked by the Afghan Border Officer (Sarhad-Dar). After going through these formalities the visitor leaves for Jalalabad. Dakka to Jalalabad—40 miles. There is on leaving Dakka nothing to arrest the attention until Jalalabad is reached. Except for the Speen Ghar Range on the left at a distance of some 20 miles to relieve the monotony, the landscape is mostly barren and uninspiring.

The road lies nearly parallel to the Kabul River, between two ranges of mountains, which, running east to west, enclose between them a region about 20 miles wide from north to south. This intermediate country is by no means a valley, as it is divided into a series of small plains by crossing ranges of small hills. The plains are nearly barren and quite stony. It is only at the foot of the hills and along the banks of the river that fertile patches are to be seen.

**Jalalabad :** (Height 1,950 ft., population 35,000) Jalalabad stands nearly in the centre of a plain which extends from east to west about 20 miles, with a breadth at its widest part from 10 to 12 miles. The cultivated portion is often intersected by water-cuts. The northern portion bordering the Kabul River is extremely swampy and unhealthy. The river here is broad, rapid and clear, having a breadth (during October) of more than a hundred yards. Its banks are low and far apart.

Jalalabad, the provincial capital, of Nangrahar is 98 miles from Kabul. This place makes an excellent resort in winter when its climate is most cheering. The old town of Jalalabad is in no way remarkable, but the new city is well-laid out. On the road to Kabul, there are some beautiful bungalows and palaces, surrounded by pleasant gardens, reaching to the banks of the river, which in winter are a joy to the visitors. There is a Rest House in an attractive locality on the Kabul road.

Places of interest in the neighbourhood : Many places of historical interest and natural beauty, within easy reach of Jalalabad, may be visited. Of these the first is Hadda, which lies 5 miles south of the city. It is very rich in historic reminders of an eventful past, and has played an important rôle in the annals of the country. The well-known school of sculpture, known by the name of Gandhara School had, undoubtedly, its centre at Hadda, where its most beautiful specimens have been discovered. Hadda is also the last resting place of a well-known Afghan divine, Akhundzada Mir Najmuddin, who took a prominent part in the tribal wars against the British at the close of the nineteenth century A.D.

The whole plain of Jalalabad is littered with the ruins of the Buddhist age, foremost among these being caves, monastries,

and stupas. About a dozen of these stupas, built probably in the later part of the Kushan period, are still to be seen, though partly damaged.

Another place of interest is Nimla, a beautiful Mughal garden planted with cypress trees of great size and beauty. It lies 26 miles west of Jalalabad, on the old road leading to Kabul, *via* Jigdalik Pass. From Nimla one can see the dense forests on the slopes of the Speen Ghar. Here lie some of the fine hill-stations of the Nangrahar Province, such as Kaja, Mamakhel, Khugyani, etc. Gandomak, 8 miles west of Nimla, is the place where in 1879 Amir Yakoub Khan was forced to sign an agreement with the British, whereby he agreed to conduct his relations with Foreign States "in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British Government."

Forty-eight miles west of Jalalabad, on the same old route, lies the Jigdalik Pass—so famous in Afghan history. It was here that the remnants of the British Occupation Army, in their retreat from Kabul during the First Afghan War, made a last stand against the Afghans, and were all cut to pieces (January 13, 1842).

**Jalalabad to Kabul (Distance 98 miles):** The new road goes along the Kabul River, and after passing Daroonta, where the river is spanned by a beautiful suspension bridge, takes to the left and runs along the foot of a barren hill. The fertile valley of Laghman lies to the right, flanked on two sides, north and west, by snowcapped mountains.

From Daroonta (9 miles west of Jalalabad) a road leads across the bridge to Laghman, and another runs to the Kunar Valley, beyond which lies the romantic country of Nuristan.

The main road, leaving the Daroonta bridge to the right, enters a spacious sandy plain, south of Laghman, and runs roughly parallel to the Kabul River, which flows in the opposite direction. After 25 miles from Daroonta, the road enters a narrow defile, hardly 100 yards wide, enclosed by high and rugged rocks. Below, the Kabul River rolls over boulders and huge stones, tumbling with thunderous roar. The road for the most part in this gorge is cut in the face of the rock, and though comparatively narrow, in some places is well-laid out and is free from difficult or steep gradients.

At Sarobi, 42 miles from Jalalabad, where the gorge ends, there is a fine rest house, overlooking the Kabul River. From here the road enters another passage comparatively broader and encompassed by low sandy hills. This is the Tezeen gorge, (Tezeen Khuwar). Thence it enters a third defile between steep and lofty hills, devoid of verdure. This is the Lataband Pass. For the first 26 miles, the road scrambles up a steep ascent, from 4,500 to 8,200 feet, and then descends deeply into another narrow gorge, Mulla Omar, till Butkhak is reached (6,500 ft.). Tractors are used to keep the passage free of snow during winter.

A new hydro-electric plant has been installed at Sarobi by a German engineering firm. This project, the largest of its kind in the country, supplies electricity to the Capital as well as to the new textile mills at Gul Bahar.

A new road between Kabul and Sarobi, the Tangi-Gharu short-cut as it is called, is now under construction which will slice some ten miles off the driving distance from Kabul to Peshawar. By making use of tunnels and hugging close to the Kabul River, this road not only shortens the distance, but makes driving safer, especially in winter, by avoiding the Lataband Pass, which is often blocked with snow during winter.



The new highway, which has been opened to traffic, follows the left bank of the Kabul River for 6 miles out of Kabul, and then crosses over to the right bank, connecting with the old highway before reaching the Sarobi gorge.

From Butkhak to Kabul, a distance of 11 miles, the road passes through a spacious plain. This is the valley of Kabul. Midway between Butkhak and Kabul, just on the bank of the river Lohgar, a beautiful garden attracts the attention of the visitor. This is called Bagrami, a pleasant resting place for those who want to travel slowly. From here Kabul is not more than four miles distant.

Below is the table showing the various stages and their distances in English miles :

#### PESHAWAR TO KABUL

*En route* the Khyber and Lataband Passes :

| <i>Stages</i>                  | <i>Distance<br/>in miles</i> | <i>Distances<br/>between stages</i> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Peshawar                       | starting point               | 0                                   |
| Jamrud                         | 9                            | 9                                   |
| Landi-Kotal                    | 30                           | 21                                  |
| Landi-Khana                    | 34½                          | 4½                                  |
| Torkham (Afghan Frontier Post) | 35                           | ½                                   |
| Dakka                          | 42                           | 7                                   |
| Barikao                        | 63                           | 21                                  |
| Jalalabad                      | 82                           | 19                                  |
| Daronta                        | 91                           | 9                                   |
| End of Laghman Valley          | 116                          | 25                                  |
| Sarobi                         | 134                          | 18                                  |
| Highest Point of Lataband Pass | 154                          | 20                                  |
| Butkhak                        | 170                          | 16                                  |
| Kabul                          | 181                          | 11                                  |

**Kabul (Height 6,000 ft. population 250,000) :** The city Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, lies in a triangular gorge formed by two ranges of high and steep mountains, the Asmai, 6,790 ft. (above sea-level), and Sherdarwaza, 7,166 ft., which, running south-east and north-west, nearly meet a little to the west of the old town, leaving between the two a narrow entrance traversed by the Kabul River and the roads from Ghazni and Paghman. These hills are covered with a long mud-wall, having round-towers at short intervals, probably built by the Kabul Shahis during the early period of the Muslim invasion. From the top of those hills a glorious view of the surrounding hills and mountain ranges, rising in successive waves one after another, may be obtained. The snowy summits of the lofty Hindukush, at a distance of 50 miles to the north, are also visible.

On the top of a rocky hill, south-east of the old city and at the eastern extremity of the Sherdarwaza Hills, stands the historical fort of Bala-Hissar, now the seat of a Military College founded by the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah. It was in this fort that the British Resident, Cavagnari, and his retinue were burnt to ashes, in September 1879.

On entering the city, the visitor's eye is first attracted by a column standing in the middle of a square. This is known as the "Munar-i-Najat" (the Column of Deliverance) erected in 1929 to commemorate the deliverance of the country from the cruel clutches of Bacha-i-Saqao, the Brigand Chief. To the right is a spacious parade and playground, called Chaman-i-Huzuri, where the Afghan Independence Day is celebrated each year. To the east of these grounds lies a small hill, Tappa-i-Maranjan. This is the Royal cemetery. Here lies the tomb of the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah-i-Shahid.

About four furlongs to the north of these grounds stand the buildings of the Ministry of Defence, the Military Hospital and the Central Customs Office, called Gumruk.. The visitor on entering the city has to proceed straight to the Customs Office to get his luggage examined..

Between the Ministry of Defence and the Customs Office stands another Column. This is the Column of Independence, "Munar-i-Istiqlal", erected in 1919, after the termination of the Third Anglo-Afghan War to commemorate the brilliant victory of the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah, then the Sipah-Salar (Commander-in-Chief), of the Afghan forces. Beyond the Column, at the distance of three furlongs, lies the Arg (the Royal Citadel), the Palace of Dilkusha, and the Salamkhana (the Hall of Audience), the offices of the Prime Ministry, the Foreign Office, and the new city, now called Sherpur and Karta-i-Wali. South of the Arg extends the old city, divided into two parts by the river Kabul.

The old city is beginning to show signs of modernization and is being extended in all directions. It is estimated that within the next few years the city of Kabul will cover an area of no less than 60 square miles. At present, it is divided into five prominent parts : (1) the old city, pooled in a shallow depression at the foot of the Sherdawaza Hill, which dominates it from the south : (2) Sherpur extending north-west to Kolola-Pushta and Wazirabad; (3) Nawe Kabul (or New Kabul), which is being built in the beautiful Chardeh Valley ; (4) Shah-i-Shahid, the eastern extremity of the city, (5) Karta-i-Wali lies north of the old city.

Kabul, the seat of the Afghan Government, is a great commercial and educational centre. Modern means of transportation has brought it within easy reach of all parts of the country. Owing to its advantageous position, where routes from

all directions converge, Kabul has always been a great centre of trade. The head offices of all the Afghan Banks, (D'Afghanistan Bank, the Afghan National Bank, the Agricultural Bank, the Afghan Commercial Bank, and the Construction Bank), as well as those of the Afghan Commercial concerns are located here. Representatives of some foreign firms also have their offices in Kabul.

From the tourist's point of view, Kabul is an interesting place, with fine climate and an abundance of all sorts of delicious fruits at prices which suit every pocket. Besides, there are some fine gardens in and around Kabul, suitable for all sorts of excursions. All those who have visited Kabul know these gardens very well, and it must be rare exception when someone who has been there does not hold happy memories of the hours spent in these soothing and delightful surroundings of the capital. Of these mention may be made of Bagh-i-Babur (Babur's Garden), Chihil-Stoon, Gul-Bagh, Gardens of the Secretariat in Darulaman, the King's Garden at the entrance of Paghman, and the private garden of H.R.H. Sardar Shah Mahmoud Khan Ghazi at Rishkhore, next to Gul Bagh.

(1) Babur's Garden : This garden is only a mile and a half from the western extremity of the old city, and lies at the base of the Sherdarwaza Hill. It is laid out in beautiful terraces and has two swimming pools. The tomb of Babur, founder of the Mughal Empire of India, stands on an eminence in the eastern corner of the enclosure, next to the bigger swimming pool. It is related that on his death-bed at Agra, Babur requested that his body be interred in Kabul, the choice place of his vast dominions. A clear-running stream still waters the fragrant flowers, and makes a sweet murmuring sound. Two magnificent old "chinar" trees, souvenirs of the Mughal days,

stand as sentinels to watch over his grave. A little below the tomb lies a small but chaste mosque of pure white marble. It was built by Shah Jehan, the Mughal Emperor, to commemorate the fall of Balkh. The mosque, which had fallen into ruins, is now being rebuilt. Attached to the garden is an up-to-date Café, which remains open during summer months only. Lying close to the city, this garden is a great resort of the people, especially on holidays.

(2) Chihil-Stoon : This garden lies two miles beyond on the same road, and is a great attraction to the visitor, as no better picnic spot can be found so near the city. A fine building perched on a rock some 100 feet above the surrounding ground stands in the middle of this lovely garden. The panorama of the Chardeh Valley and the surrounding hills from this place is lovely beyond description.

(3) The Secretariat lies five miles south of the old city. A beautiful highway, flanked by tall poplars, leads to it. Its gardens are very fascinating and their charms are enhanced on Fridays when numbers of holiday makers throng there.

Opposite to the Secretariat stands an attractively built two-storied building. This is the Kabul Museum. It is a good place for those who are interested in the history of the country, and want to study and do research in the sculptures, inscriptions and other antiquities recovered from excavations.

The Museum is kept open during working days from 1 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. in winter, and 1 to 4.30 p.m. during summer. Visitors are not allowed to use cameras inside the Museum without obtaining permission from the Archæological Department of the Ministry of Education.

(4) Gul Bagh (Flower Garden): It lies on the southern extremity of the Chardeh Valley, three miles beyond the Secretariat and has a lovely charm amidst beautiful groves of lofty poplars. The river Kabul runs through it, dividing the garden into two parts. It is a pleasant place for those who can spare a little leisure for enjoying its eternal peace and for breathing the pure and serene atmosphere.

(5) Next to Gul Bagh, at a distance of a few furlongs, an imposing building, standing on an eminence, attracts the attention of the visitor. This is the private property of H.R.H. Sardar Shah Mahmood Ghazi, adorned with a neat well-kept garden and lovely swimming pool.

(6) The King's Garden: It lies at the eastern extremity of Paghman, at a distance of 14 miles from Kabul. It is well-laid out, properly looked after, and is regarded as one of the best gardens in the East.

(7) Paghman: Beyond the King's Garden lies Paghman, set in the lap of a lofty mountain of the same name. The whole locality is exceptionally clean, calm and healthy. It has pure invigorating ozone-laden air, free from fog or dust. Beautiful cottages, pleasant terraces, and fine walks abound in all directions. Many are the delightful excursions to be made in the neighbourhood. It is the summer residence of His Majesty the King, and possesses all the qualifications of an up-to-date residential town. It has always attracted those seeking rest and recreation among sublime beauties of nature.

(8) The Chardeh Valley: Most of the above gardens are located in the famous valley of Chardeh, which is a spacious amphitheatre encircled on all sides by lofty hills, each range

rising higher and higher till the view is terminated by the snow-clad summits of the Hindu-Kush. The plain is watered by innumerable irrigation streams, cut from the Kabul and the Paghman Rivers, and during summer it is covered with smiling green fields and is gay with flowers of every description. The fields and lanes are all fringed by rows of stately poplars, willows and sinjits. The orchards richly stocked with fruit trees, flowers and vegetables, diversify the landscape. The Kabul and the Paghman Rivers, their banks shaded by trees, and here and there guarded by forts, wind leisurely through this happy valley. Some of the fine public buildings—those of the civil hospitals, Rifqi Sanatorium, Medical College, Malaria Institute, Faculty of Science, Government Poultry and Dairy Farms, and the Teachers' Training College—are also located in the different parts of this famous valley.

The famous shrines in and around Kabul are those of Ashuqan-o-Arifan, Khawaja-Safa, Shah-i-do-Shumshera, Shah Shahid, Timur Shah, Hazrat Jabir-i-Ansar, Sakhi, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, the late King Mohammad Nadir Shah Shahid, and Sayyed Jamaluddin Afghani.

**(2) Kabul to Mazari-Sharif (distance 389 miles):** After crossing the Khair-Khana Pass 4 miles north-west of Kabul, the traveller finds himself in a spacious and beautiful plain, called Kohdaman or Samti-Shamali (old names—Paropamisadæ and Capisia). This Kohdaman (the skirts of the hills), which intervenes between Alexandria-ad-Caucasum (probably modern Charikar) and Kabul, is one of the most fascinating valleys of Afghanistan.

The road which intersects this beautiful valley is level for the most part, and is flanked with mulberry trees. There is a

steady fall from the Khiar-Khana pass right up to Charikar. The chief stages *en route* are : Shakar Darrah (the Sugar-Valley), Sarai-Khoja and Karra-Bagh. From the last point a road leads to Istaliff, and the second runs to the Bagram plains, so famous in history.

Charikar, a thriving town, and a busy commercial centre, forty miles from Kabul; lies at the northern extremity of Kohdaman, at the mouth of Ghorband Valley. Some have identified it with Alexandria-ad-Caucasum. Three miles west of the town, at the foot of the Paghman range, lies the historic village of Opian (or Hupian). A second road to the right, leads to Gul Bahar, which lies ten miles east of Charikar. Thence a road goes to Tagab, Nijrab (or Nijrao) and Sarobi, and a second to Panjsher.

The main road from Charikar, running parallel to the Paghman range, crosses a small iron bridge, Puli-Mattak as it is called. A few furlongs ahead it branches off again, one part going to the right and leading to Jabalus-Seradj, a fascinating valley, at the entrance to the Salung Pass, where are located a hydro-electric station, supplying electricity to the capital, a cement factory, and a textile mill ; the other branch, turning to the left, passes through a narrow gorge. This is the beautiful valley of Ghorband, which is some sixty miles long, and one to ten miles broad, while in some places the rocky cliffs on either side are hardly 100 yards apart. The road runs along the Ghorband River. It often skirts difficult hills with deep ascents and descents. The Ghorband Valley is very famous for fruits, especially peaches and almonds.

The Valley of Muttak, too, has great charms. The roaring milky-white waters of the Muttak irrigate every beach-like lowland along its course ; every inch of ground has been planted



in corn, wheat, rice or clover. There are mulberry trees all around. In July the edges of the fields show yarrow, morning glories, chicory and hollyhocks. The Ghorband valley shrinks as the road approaches Shibar Pass. Now it is a twisting defile with little place left for any farming Project. The cliffs rise straight and steep, showing limetone, sandstone and granite.

The road climbs sharply, winding along the edges of cliffs, swinging in cutbacks across rugged slopes, rising to a crest and then dropping to narrow canyons, only to climb again. The road drops into a gorge that gets narrower and narrower for 20 miles or more. Now the walls of the canyons are squeezed so close that there is often little land to till and so none is tilled. On the south side of the Shibar, the green river-bottoms stand like oases between dry hills. On the north side of the Shibar, the contrasts are slightly different, dark-green river bottoms against barren hill-sides, grey-green water under purple and red cliffs, and a winding strip of fields and orchards that run like a lush furrow down a dry, winding mountain defile.

The famous places *en route* are Burj Guljan (55 miles from Kabul), Siah Gird, 70 miles Chardeh, 78 miles and Kazi Baiza, 111 miles at the foot of the Shibar Pass, where the Ghorband takes its source. Shibar is a difficult pass and during winter is often blocked with snow. About 19 miles west of the pass the road branches off; one taking to right enters the Shikari Pass, whence it leads to Mazari-Sharif and Kataghan, while the second, turning left, leads to Bamian, the City of Caves, which is only 15 miles from the junction and 145 miles from Kabul. The road to Bamian runs roughly parallel to the river of the same name in the opposite direction, and skirts a range of hills. After six miles from the pass an old mud fort perched on a steep rock attracts the attention

of the traveller to itself. This is called the city of Zahak-i-Maran. A little further the valley widens and the city of caves, more than 2,000 in number, appears. This is the historic city of Bamian, now in ruins, lying at the foot of a hill, 8,400 feet above sea-level.

The Valley of Bamian, deep sunk in the great plateau, is between 8,000 and 9,000 feet above the sea, and the passes leading out of it are over 10,000 feet. To the south is the magnificent snow-capped array of Koh-i-Baba, the culminating group of the central water-parting of Afghanistan, running to 16,000 and 17,000 feet. Rocky and toothbreaking, as may be the passes of these northern hills, they are all practicable at certain times and seasons, but for months they are closed by the deep snow of winter storms, and the fierce terror of a blizzard. The deep valleys traversing the storm-ridden plateau are often exceedingly beautiful, and form a strange contrast to the dull and barren rocky ridges that appear on all sides.

It is the mystery of its unrecorded history and the local evidences of the departed glory of Buddhism, which render Bamian the most interesting valley of Afghanistan. Bamian, though today completely in ruins, speaks eloquently of its one-time grandeur. Each year has seen some striking revelation of its past history or some beautiful addition to the magnificent collection in the Museum of Kabul. Much still remains to be excavated to throw more light on the deeper secrets of its past history.

Massive ruins still look down from the bordering cliffs, and for six or seven miles these cliffs are pierced by an infinity of cave dwellings. Little is left of the ancient city, except its acropolis (known as Shahr-i-Ghulghula), which crowns an



The newly-built Silo at Kabul.



Kabul Museum.

isolated rock in the middle of the Valley. Enormous figures of Buddha (53 and 35 metres high) are carved out of the sedimentary rock on the sides of the Bamian Gorge. Once coated with cement and possibly coloured and gilded, these images must have appealed strongly to the imagination of the weary pilgrims, who prostrated themselves at their feet. "The golden lines sparkle on every side", says Huien Tsang, who saw them in the year 630 A.D., when he counted more than ten monasteries and a thousand monks of the "Little Vehicle" in the Valley of Bamian.

Of the images, the smaller, over 100 feet in height, is the older. It seems that it was begun in the second century A.D., probably under the influence of patronage of Buddhism by Kanishka the Great. The bigger one of about 160 feet is of a later date, probably the fourth or fifth century A.D. The niches of the Buddha contain marred but still beautiful frescoes, dating from about the same periods. They are very interesting from the archæological point of view, as they show an important stage in the long process which brought the Buddhist art of India to Afghanistan and blended it with Greek and Sassanian elements before it ultimately found its way through Sikiang to China and Japan. "It is funny how things travel—an unknown Greek artist, here in Afghanistan, created the first image of the Buddha by adapting to the needs of the new creed the image of Apollo. India gave to this hybridization the stamp of its deeper spirituality. Then it travelled back through Afghanistan and Central Asia to inspire the Buddhist masterpieces of China and Japan".

Aesthetically there is nothing really beautiful about these two Buddhas. They are out of all proportion. Yet ugly and

uncouth as they are, there is about them a deep religious aura. Whatever your religion, you cannot help feeling that the artists who carved them have put all their faith into their work, and that at least some of their spirit is still there. And if you look at them at night, especially if there is a moon.....well, you may think that they are still alive.

“However few and scattered the ruins may be now, it is difficult to evoke the Bamian of old, as Huien Tsang saw it—when the Buddhas stood in all their glory, gilded and polychromed ; when the caves were full of shaven monks in their yellow robes singing the praises of the Blessed One ; when the last descendants of the great Kushan conquerors were still trying to keep up the artistic traditions of their ancestors ; and when the town, the size of which was said to be so great that a child lost in its streets was only identified again as an old man of 75, was pulsating with life”.

There is an unmistakably religious atmosphere around Bamian. It was, as we have seen, an important Buddhist centre and it must have been a religious centre before that. In the days of old, when Bamian was lying on the great caravan route between India and China, travellers, after days spent battling across the Hindukush, where nature is so fierce and seems ready to crush man at any moment, suddenly saw opening in front of them the Valley of Bamian—green, peaceful, full of flowing streams, crowned by the majesty of Koh-i-Baba—and they must have thought it a gift of God for the grant of this oasis in the wilderness of the mountains.”

Bamian, though now in ruins, is still one of the curiosities of the world. The city was swept off the face of the valley by

Changez Khan early in the thirteenth century A.D. It is said that one of Changez Khan's grandsons, Mutugen, son of Jaghtai, was killed in the action when the Mughuls were besieging Jalaluddin, son of Alauddin Mohammad Khwarazmshah in the citadel of Bamian. When the town surrendered, Changez, in revenge, ordered that every living being, man or animal, should be killed. The ruined town was then named Mao-Baligh, that is, "the bad town".

Bamian was an important commercial centre in the Middle Ages, but now the new route, which connects Kabul with the northern provinces, passes some 15 miles to the north.

The present Afghan Government, which shows great interest in the relics of the past, is diligently looking after ancient monuments, and for the sake of travellers, who every year visit this place in large numbers from all over the world, has built here a comfortable rest-house.

From here a difficult road leads to Herat through the heart of the Hazara country. In winter it is rather impassable. Some 50 miles west of Bamian on this route lies Band-i-Amir, a fine chain of lakes encompassed by hills of various colours. The whole locality is of extreme beauty. The water of the lakes is of bluish green in colour and quite transparent. The old Hejdah Nahr (or 18 canals) of Balkh, famous in local history, probably received water from these lakes.

**Band-i-Amir:** One of the most interesting places for tourists to visit is Band-i-Amir, which, with its numerous and beautiful lakes is deemed one of the wonders of the world. The waters of Band-i-Amir issue forth from a spring named Kaprak, 10 miles from the sanctuary of Band-i-Amir. The water contains

much calcium and has gradually formed, during thousands of years, the five splendid lakes of the Band-i-Zulficar, Pudina, Panir, Haibat and Ghulaman. Band-i-Zulficar, the largest of them does not, at its greatest breadth, exceed 200 metres, but its length is about five kilometres.

Band-i-Amir, as is true of most of the world's wonders, has its legends. It is said that a most puissant monarch named Barbar reigned from this region over the valleys of Koh-i-Baba and the Hindu Kush, and even beyond that. The legends place his capital at a place some 25 miles from Band-i-Amir, north-west of the Yakaolang, called Shahr-i-Barbar or Chihil Burj. It is said that in those days the water flowed in a head-long torrent that menaced the forts of the city and even threatened Balkh. In order to curb the stream, Barbar Shah commanded a thousand slaves to work each day from morn till eve in damming them. At last through a miracle of the Fourth Caliph, Ali, the waters impounded themselves and formed the existing five lakes. Later on 18 canals were dug out of them for irrigating the northern regions of this district.

A quantity of water, sufficient to turn a water-wheel, flows into the lake of Band-i-Amir. The same amount of water descends on the spillways of Band-i-Haibat, the last of the lakes forming cascades. Moving along from the source of the lakes, the first that comes into view is the Band-i-Zulficar, the largest of them all. The second is the Band-i-Pudina. From this lake the water flows leisurely to Band-i-Panir. As the retaining walls of this lake are white, so it was given this name, which means the "Lake of Cheese". Next comes the lake of Haibat, the most beautiful of all. This lake has a length of four kilometres



and is exceedingly deep. Its rose-coloured walls rise perpendicularly from its azure surface. The white and rose margin of the sky-blue waters makes a marvellous panorama.

The waters of Band-i-Amir, together with those of Ab-i-Ali and Ab-i-Sarkol in the vicinity of Yakaolang, flow past the base of the palace of Barbar Shah and the ruins of Chihil Burj. They are joined during the length of their course by streams from the eastern slope of Koh-i-Hissar, whence they flow to Dandan-Shikan, and then veer towards the north, forming Balkh-Ab.

A visit to Band-i-Amir reminds one of the lines of Moore :

There's bower of roses by Bendemeer's stream,

At the nightingale sings round it all the day long.

**Shikari Pass to Pul-i-Khumri:** The main road, after leaving the Bamian valley to the south, enters another gorge called Dar-i-Shikari. It runs along the Bamian river, which now flows to the north-west. The Shikari Pass commences at a distance of 130 miles from Kabul, and is 259 miles from Mazari-Sharif. This distance of 259 miles, from a geographical point of view, may be divided into three parts. The road for the first ninety miles runs through a very difficult country, where it is hemmed in by huge precipitous mountains of different colours, rich with the remains of old forts perched on the rocks. The scenery throughout is most charming. At the termination of the Pass lies Mekh-i-Zareen (the Golden Peg). Here for the convenience of travellers a modern rest-house has been erected. The whole locality is famous for the variety of game. There is trout in the river, and deer, pheasants and partridges along the mountain sides. Mekh-i-Zareen is 163 miles from Kabul. Here the Saighan-Kahmard stream flows into the Bamian, and that is why the place is called Doab, the junction of two streams.

The combined stream then flows towards Tala and Barfak, the famous coal mines. The road running parallel to the river enters another gorge, which terminates at the coal mines.

For the next eighty miles the road runs through the district of small hills, chiefly composed of earth. Some of the hills are covered with small bushes. Remains of stupas and ancient cities can be seen on all sides. At Doshi (224 miles from Kabul) the Andirab joins Shikari. At Puli-Khumri (254 miles from Kabul) the road branches off; one turning to the north-east to Beghlan, Khanabad, Kunduz, Hazrat-i-Imam, and finally to Bakhshan and Wakhan; the other, turning to the left, enters an undulating plain. At Rubatak the neighbouring hills are all covered with pistachio trees. After crossing a small pass the traveller finds himself in a vast plain, where lies the historic town of Aibak (or Halbak). The whole of the district is full of important remains, stupas, monasteries, and forts. Capt. Talbot, during the Afghan-Russian border disputes, unearthed some fine relics in this locality. A small irregular stupa made out of solid rock was discovered below ground level. It was surrounded by a ditch, and crowned by a small square-built chamber, which was also cut out of rock. Here he had the evidence of Buddhist occupation and Buddhist workmanship forming a distinct link between Balkh and Bamian, and marking one resting place of the weary pilgrim.

The ditch-like valleys carved out of the wrinkled central highlands of Afghanistan have existed as the focus of devout pilgrimage, if not commercial activity, under the Bamian kings. Above the surface of the plateau the long grey folds of the hills follow each other in monotonous succession, with little relief from vegetation and unmarked by forest growth. It is generally

a scene of weary, stony desolation through which narrow white-worn tracks go in every direction. In the valley it is quite different. Cut squarely out of the plateau, these intersecting valleys, cliff-bound on either side with reddish walls like the ones which border the valley of Bamian, offer fair opportunity for sedentary life. Where these valleys open up there is space enough for cultivation, which in early spring makes a pretty contrast with the ruddy hills which hedge it on all sides. The plain of Aibak is watered by the Khulm River. The ancient route *via* Bamian, Saighan and Kahmard meets the present route at this place.

From Aibak onwards there is a vast expanse. This is the famous Bactrian plain, which extends as far as the Oxus. It is flat with a scattering of prominences and mounds at intervals, denoting the site of some villages or fortresses of sufficient antiquity to account for its gradual rise on the accumulations of its own debris, probably assisted in the first instance by some topographical feature. Looking south, it appears to be flanked by a flat blue wall of hills, presenting no opportunity for passage through it. This great flanking wall is in reality very nearly what it appears to be—an unassailable rampart ; but on approaching it some narrow ways intersecting it are discernible, through which the rivers of the highland make a rough passage to the plains. Wherever they tumble through the mountain gateways and make placid tracks in the flats below, they are utilised for irrigation purposes. Thus there exists a narrow fringe of cultivation under the hills which extends here and there along the banks of the rivers cut into the open Bactrian plain. These rivers never reach the Oxus. The waters of the streams are all lost in the plains ere they approach the great river. Nevertheless, there are abundant evidences of the former existence of a vast irrigation

system drawn from the Oxus. The small lines of level mounds, which break the horizon of the plains of Babylon are also to be seen here, and they denote the same thing. They are the containing walls of canals which carried the Oxus waters through the hundreds of square miles of flat plains, where they can never be carried again because of the alteration in the respective levels of the plain and the river.

These rolling wavelike hills, with their marvellous spread of grass and flowers in early summer, and which are dreary, wind-scoured and barren in winter, are excellent sheep grazing grounds, and are the home of the famous Karakul sheep.

The city of Mazar-i-Sharif, lying in the midst of this plain, is only 90 miles north of Aibak. After crossing the plain of Hazrat Sultan and Sabad, the traveller comes to the fertile valley of Khulm (previously called Tashqurghan), noted for its beautiful garden of Jehan Numa (the Mirror of the World).

Khulm is 351 miles from Kabul, and 38 miles from Mazari-Sharif. Relics of the ancient city of Shahribanu (the Queen's City) can be seen here up to this day. From here a road goes east and leads to Kanduz and Khanabad, while the main road, running west, crosses a vast plain, and *via* Gorimar leads to Mazari-Sharif.

**Mazar-i-Sharif :** (Population : 50,000 ; height 2,650 Ft.): Mazar is now a thriving commercial centre of northern Afghanistan. Most of the trade to and from Russia passes through it, in addition to the huge trade that is done in Karakul skin throughout the district. The modern town of Mazar has been built around a shrine, supposed to be the last resting place (Mazar) of the fourth Caliph, Hazrat-i-Ali. Some believe that after the death of the Caliph, his body was brought here and

interred secretly, so that the Khwarijs, his bitter enemies, should not desecrate it. It is on this account that it is held in the greatest veneration by the Muslims of all sects in the country. Once a year, during early spring, a great fair is held here, called the Mela-i-Gul-i-Surkh (the Festival of Red Tulips), during which the blind, infirm and maimed of many distant regions crowd into Mazar and, encamping around the shrine with the belief in miraculous power of healing, watch day and night for the Saint's interposition on their behalf.

The tradition goes that during the reign of Sultan Sanjar a man named Mohammad found in some books the information that Hazrat-i-Ali was buried in the Khairan Fort, near Balkh. He therefore came to Balkh and spread the news. Some of the Sayyeds of the town said that they too had a dream to this effect. The story was related to the governor, but a priest stubbornly denied it. That night, however, Ali himself appeared to this mullah and sharply reprimanded him for disbelieving these reports. The governor with all his staff at once went to the spot, where the grave was believed to be, and opening it, found the body of Ali in perfect preservation with an epitaph.

By the order of Sultan Sanjar (1117—1157 A.D) a building was at once erected over the grave. Changez Khan, during his depredations in the early part of the thirteenth century, destroyed the edifice, and only the grave known as the grave of Khoja Khairam remained intact. Later on, a descendant of Bayezid Bustami made it known again that the grave was that of Ali, and the coffin was reopened by the order of Sultan Hussain Bayaqla (1467—1504 A.D.). A red brick was found in the grave on which it was recorded that this was the grave of Hazrat-i-Ali. By the order of the Sultan a new shrine was built over it in 1481, which exists to this day.

The tomb consists of two lofty cupolas, and it suggests that the plan was copied from the Mussallas of Herat. The exterior walls have been retiled. As it is now, there is nothing in the mausoleum to compare it with the buildings and tile-works of Herat; but all the same the general turquoise-blue effect is very pleasing under the bright Afghan sky, surrounded as it is by old trees and flocks of white pigeons flying around it.

(3) Mazari-Sharif to Herat: (Distance 507 miles, *via* Balkh, Aqchah, Shibarghan, Shah Mardan, Maimanah, Murghab, Qala-i-Nao, and Sabzak-Pass).

(a) Mazari-Sharif to Balkh (distance 12 miles): Balkh is frankly a great disappointment. One has heard so much of this city that was already of a hoary antiquity when Herodotus wrote his history, that one expects to see something of its past grandeur. As one approaches Balkh by the Aqchah road from the west, one looks anxiously around for some outward signs of its extreme antiquity. They are not altogether wanting, but time and the mellowing hand of nature have rounded off the mounds of debris which lie scattered over miles of the surrounding country, covered with the fresh green of vegetation that leaves no sign by which to judge the age of its hoary past. It is difficult to get back farther than the age of the terrible conqueror Changez Khan. Beyond these surface ruins and below them, there must be cities, arrayed, as it were, in underground flats, one piled on another, strata below strata, till we reach the debris of the pre-Semitic days of Western and Central Asia. It was here that the Aryans laid the foundation of their first city—Bakhdi of Lofty Banners. It existed centuries before the era of Alexander the Great. Of its extreme antiquity there can be no doubt. It is certain that at a very early date it was the rival of Ninevah and of Babylon.

The Arab historians call it Ummul-Bilad (the Mother of Cities). It was a great centre of commerce, a city of pilgrimage, Buddhist as well as Muslim, for many a century. But the city, which once covered a circuit of twenty miles, is now in ruins—a waste of ruins and many acres of debris—and the spectacle is extremely touching and awe-inspiring. Very little is left of the massive walls which once surrounded it. All that is left of it is a mound of dried mud, worn by weather into all manner of desolate and fantastic shapes. The whole of the northern portion is a heap of dust and debris. To the west three lofty arches still mark the remains of the Jama Masjid (Grand Mosque). The green cupola of the Masjid-i-Sabz (Green Mosque), and the arched entrance to the ruined Madressah (Academy) testify to the period of early Muslim occupation, as do the Top-i-Rustam and the Takht-i-Rustam (two ancient stupas) to the fervour of religious zeal with which its Buddhist inhabitants invested it in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Next to the Bazaar is the shrine of Khoja Abu Nasr-i-Parsa, a Timurid building of the second half of the fifteenth century. The facade is tiled with colours confined to white and two shades of blue, with some touches of black. Behind it, the dome, melon-shaped and ribbed, is covered with a mosaic of tiny tiles glazed in greenish-turquoise hue. It is an excellent specimen of Timurid architecture.

About the end of the fifteenth century because of the insalubrity of its climate Balkh began to be abandoned by the population in favour of Mazari-Sharif. Now the Afghan government, after some reclamation work, is trying with some success to revive Balkh by developing in the district the cultivation of cotton, and a new town is coming to life amongst the ruins.

(b) Balkh to Andkhoy (133 miles) *via* Nasratabad (40 miles), Aqchah (56 miles), Shibarghan (93 miles), Khwaja Dokoh (101 miles). The road for the most part is level and runs through a sandy plane. The scenery is monotonous and tiring. Andkhoy is a small town but has a flourishing trade in carpets and Karakul skins.

(c) Andkhoy to Maimanah (85 miles). For the first fifty-three miles there is a vast plain. Then the traveller finds himself in an undulating desert of small hills. Maimanah is a small commercial centre, and is chiefly noted for its fruits. It is the centre of the province of the same name.

(d) Maimanah to Bala-Murghab (107 miles). The road runs through an undulating plain for the most part. Important stages *en route* are Ilmar, Kaisar, Kurmach, Bukiz, and Maruchak.

(e) Mala-Murghab to Qala-i-Nao (71 miles). There is no change in the general appearance of the country. Qala-i-Nao is an important commercial centre.

(f) Qala-i-Nao to Herat (99 miles). After a journey of thirty miles the Paropamisus range is reached. The road then leads through a pass, Sabzak as it is called, which presents some difficulty during winter months, when it is usually blocked with snow.

(g) After crossing the pass, we enter the plain of Herat, watered by the Hari-Rud (Arius of the classical writers). Other famous passes through the Paropamisus are : Zarmast, Ardewan, Sang, and Hazrat Baba. The total fall from these passes to Herat is about 2,000 feet. Between this range and the city there is a low ridge called the Koh-i-Mulla Khwaja, which with an attitude 600 to 800 feet higher dominates the city from a distance of about three miles.



(4) Puli-Khumri to Khanabad : (Distance about 70 miles). At Puli-Khumri the Kabul-Mazar road branches off. One turns right and *via* Baghlan leads to Khanabad. Baghlan is now the centre of the Kataghan province. It is newly built and well-laid out and has a big sugar factory, the annual output of which is about 4,000 tons. The road from Puli-Khumri to Baghlan is level, but between Baghlan and Khanabad there are some low hills. From Khanabad roads lead in various directions. One goes to Taluqan, while a second runs straight north to Kunduz, and from there to Hazrat-i-Imam on the Oxus, beyond which lies the district of Badakhshan, a country of numerous lofty mountains in whose bosom some very fine valleys are located. To some people, this small and enchanting mountain district has an attraction of an almost unique kind.

Winters are severe, the passes are blocked with snow, and the streams are frozen over, but summers are genial. Rainfall, owing to the presence of forests, is sufficient

Badakhshan has considerable mineral wealth. Salt deposits and rubies, lapis-lazuli and sulphur mines are known to exist in several places. Badakhshan was famous for its lapis-lazuli some three thousand years before the Christian era and had a brisk trade with China, Bokhara, and other countries of western Asia, even as far as Egypt. Another article of export was rubies, which have furnished the poets with many a simile. Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller of the 13th century, fully appreciated these beautiful rubies. He also speaks of "the finest azure in the world." The mines of Lapis-lazuli (Lajaward) are still worked. Grain mills, driven by water, are very frequently met with in this area. The mountaineers have taken full advantage of this natural source of power. Gushing streams are to be seen in all directions.

Badakhshan is also very famous for its delicious fruits, especially apples and pears.

Faizabad, the capital city of the district, lies some 120 miles north of Khanabad and is approached by a motor-road.

Further east the Alpine territory of Wakhan is situated. Owing to the difficult nature of the country, Wakhan is nearly an isolated part of Afghanistan. It consists of two upland valleys which are watered by the Panja. The valleys are hemmed in on either side by lofty mountains. Those to the south form the northern section of the Hindu Kush, and are here crossed by very difficult passes, the easiest of which is the Broghil (12,460 ft.) leading to Chitral and Gilgit. The chief resources of people are derived from the flocks of Tibetan Yak. Wakhan is too elevated and sterile for tillage. The lowest hamlet in this district is at an elevation of 8,000 ft; the highest is no less than 11,000 ft. above sea-level. In some of the lower districts peas and barley are cultivated to a very limited extent. In April the seed is planted and in July the harvest is reaped.

(5) Kabul to Kandahar (315 miles); (a) Kabul to Ghazni: 90 miles; (b) Ghazni to Mukur: 68 miles; (c) Mukur to Kalat-i-Ghilzai: 73 miles; (d) Kalat-i-Ghilzai to Kandahar: 84 miles.

Kabul to Ghazni (90 miles) :

(1) The first stage is Arghandi, which lies 14 miles west of Kabul. The road for the first six or seven miles runs through the highly cultivated valley of Chardeh. Beyond Mehtab Qala there is a gradual ascent over a rough stony road to a point within three miles of Arghandi, where there is a gradual descent. Arghandi is higher than Kabul by 628 feet.

(2) Arghandi to Maidan (12 miles). The road is generally level but there are some sharp turns. Maidan is a very fertile and beautiful tract of land. It is low and level and is surrounded on two sides by high snow-covered mountains. It is intersected by numerous streams mostly cut from the river Kabul.

(3) Maidan to Sheikhabad (17 miles). The road is generally level and offers no particular difficulty. After crossing a small river Sheikhabad is reached, which is halfway between Ghazni and Kabul. Here begins the country of Wardak which abounds in beautiful valleys.

(4) Sheikhabad to Takyah (14 miles). A few easy ascents and descents but on the whole the road presents no special difficulty.

(5) Takyah to Shishgao (16 miles). There is a gradual ascent until Shishgao (8,500 feet above sea-level) is reached. The country in the vicinity is generally fertile but there is a great shortage of water. A few streams intersect the valley. Trees are few and far between. Shishgao is extremely cold in winter and blizzards are very common.

(6) Shishgao to Ghazni (17 miles). There is again a steady ascent till a pass is reached which is some 9,000 feet above sea-level. During winter the pass is often blocked with snow, and communication between Kabul and Ghazni is interrupted for a few days.

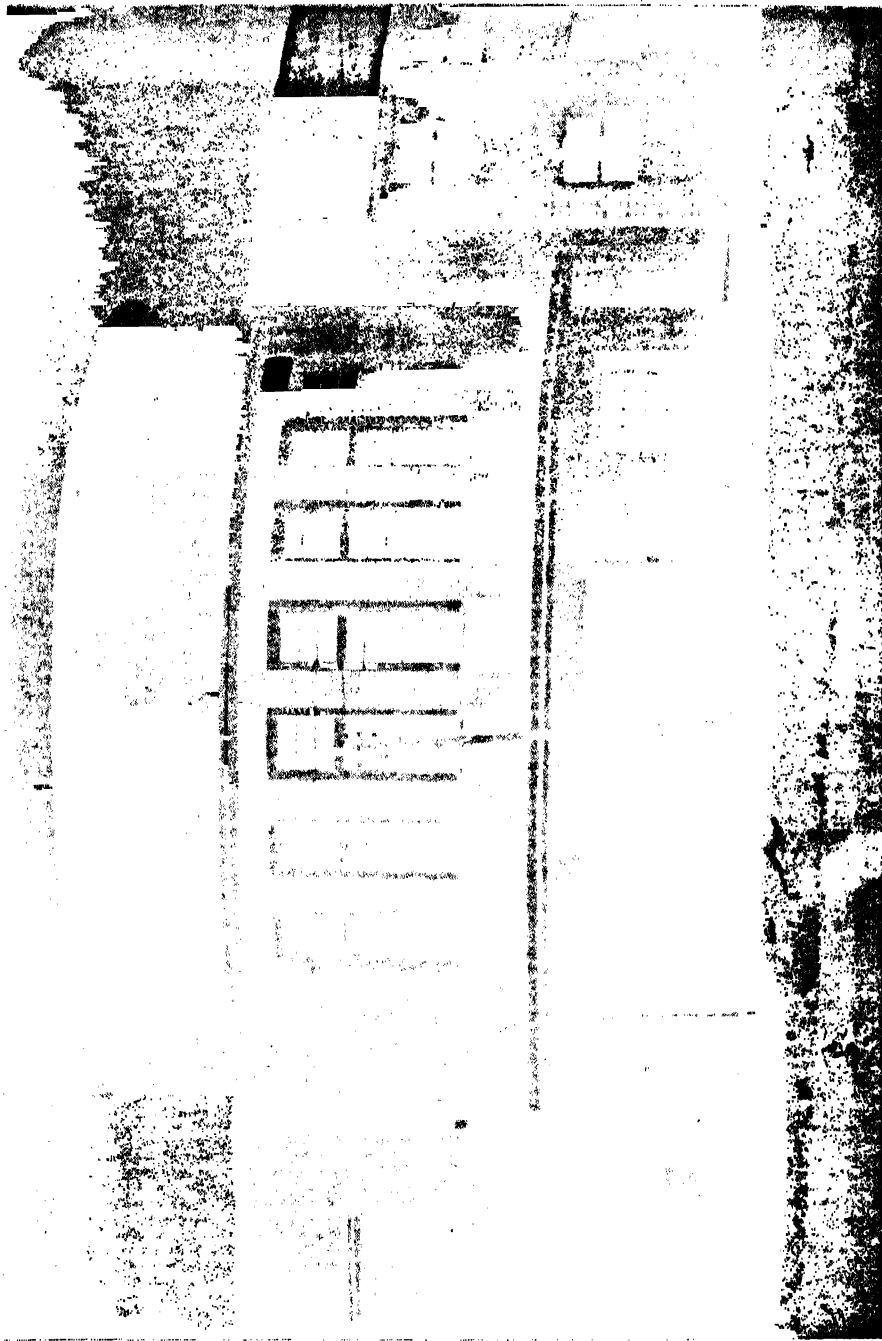
**Ghazni :** The capital of the Ghaznavides and the principal point between Kabul and Kandahar occupies an important commercial as well as strategical position, since it commands the roads passing through the Gomal, Tochi and Peiwar passes.

The old town of Ghazni is built upon an isolated ridge, a natural mound, partly rock and partly earth. It is surrounded by a high ditch-wall, having a circuit of about a mile and a half. The form of the town is a sort of irregular square, the well being built so as to suit the outline of the mound on which it rests. The foundation of the wall is a little above the surrounding country, and as it winds round the hill, it presents a very formidable appearance. The mound which it encircles resembles a fortress of which the citadel is the apex.

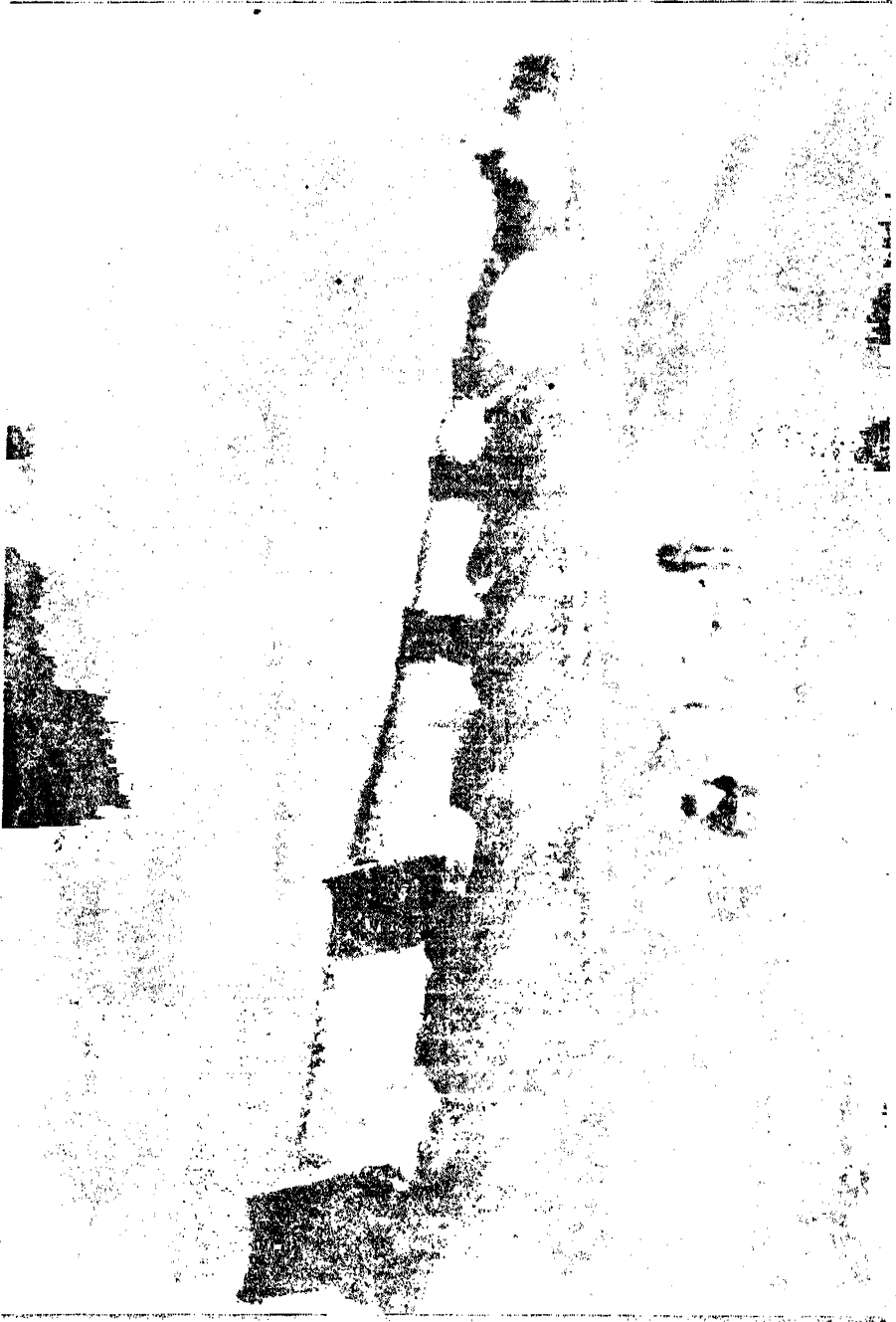
Unfortunately, the bitter feud between the Ghazavides and the princes of Ghore during the of middle the 12th century A. D. had tragic effects upon beautiful Ghazni, the capital of Sultan Mahmoud (998—1030). Ala-ud-din of Ghore entered the city triumphantly in 1148 and gave it up to massacre and destruction. Nothing was spared except the tombs of Sultan Mahmoud, Masoud and Ibrahim. The city was set on fire and most of the splendid buildings were razed to the ground. Since then Ghazni has not been able to attain its former glory.

The present town of Ghazni is in no way attractive, with scarcely a shadow of its past grandeur. It is small and congested with narrow lanes, not worthy of its great name. But Ghazni is still famous for its shrines and other archæological remains. The most notable of these shrines are those of Sultan Subaktagin (977-997), Sultan Mahmoud-i-Ghaznavi (998-1030), Masoud (1030-1040), Bahram Shah (1117-1153), Hakim Senai, the well-known Sofi-poet, Ali-Lala, Bahlol-i-Dana, and Sayyed Hassan. Recently, a few miles to the east of Ghani, at a place called Dehak, the tomb of Mohammad Ghorî was discovered.

Two pillars, tapering to the sky between Ghazni and the Rowza (Sultan Mahmoud's tomb), are all that are left of its past grandeur and glory.



Ebn-i-Seena Junior High School, Kabul.



An old mud fort near Busb, Kandahar Province.

The country around Ghazni is extremely fertile. There are innumerable orchards and vineyards. All sorts of fruits are produced in great abundance. Of these mention should be made of plums (alu-Bokhara), which constitute the chief article of export from this district. In addition to the land under cultivation, there are rich pastures. The climate of Ghazni is very pleasant in summer, the heat being less than that of Kabul. Ghazni is also noted for its posteens (sheepskin coats) and copper utensils.

Sultan Mahmoud's 'memory' is still preserved by a dam to the west of the city on the River Ghazni. It is still termed "Band-i-Sultan", or the "Dam of the Sultan". The Bund had fallen into decay, but was recently rebuilt and enlarged.

The foundation of a new city has been laid on the southern side of the rampart and the construction work is going on steadily.

Ghazni to Kandahar (225 miles) : For the greater part the road is level and runs from north-east to south-west. Villages are few and far between and the scenery is generally dull and monotonous. From Ghazni to Kalat-i-Ghilzai the road descends gradually. On leaving Ghazni, the road goes along the Tarnak valley, which is generally narrow. As it approaches Kandahar, it expands greatly till it attains a breadth of no less than thirty miles. The highest of the peaks which overlook this valley do not exceed 6,000 ft. The valley, though level for the most part, is in general shut in by a series of low rolling hills rising from the banks of the Tarnak River. These hills are mostly bare and very uninteresting, having a scanty covering of low thorny bushes in some places. The open portions of the valley are fertile and well-cultivated wherever water is procurable. Irrigation is mostly carried on by means of **Karezes** (underground channels).

(b) Ghazni\*to Mukur (68 miles): The road lies directly to the south, and skirts the hilly tract at the base of the Gal Range. The first stage is Nani, after which the road runs through a spacious plain called Dasht-i-Shilgar. The country on the whole is barren and sandy. Water is scarce and cultivation depends mostly on sub-terranean channels (Karez). At Mukur itself cultivation is more advanced and all sorts of provisions are procurable. Here is a rest house too.

(c) Mukur to Kalat-i-Ghilzai (73 miles): The road for the first 14 miles leads to a grassy tract with low hills on either side. The country here is an open plateau, skirted by small hills. It is fertile and well-cultivated. From Aghojan onwards the road passes through an undulating wilderness traversed by ravines.

Some ten miles from Kalat-i-Ghilzai, the road runs along the Tarnak River, the banks of which are covered with orchards, specially almond trees. At Kalat there is a strong fortress, situated on a high cliff on the right bank of the Tarnak. It is 5,540 feet above sea-level and has a decent rest house. In winter, snow generally falls as far as Kalat, beyond that the road descends abruptly.

(d) Kalat-Ghilzai to Kandahar (84 miles): From here Kandahar lies due south-west. Till Jaldak (14 miles) the road lies over an uneven plain, a small strip on either side of the Tarnak river being under cultivation. Jaldak lies on a sandy soil, dotted with patches of brush-wood.

From Jaldak onwards the general character of the country remains the same. All along the road the eye can meet extensive orchards, producing some of the fine fruits for which Kandahar has attained a world-wide fame. The water of the



river Tarnak seems to be almost exhausted. The last stage is Mohmand, only ten miles from Kandahar. Here begins the proper plain of Kandahar. About two miles outside the city there is a beautiful garden, called Manzil Bagh, which is now the headquarters of Morrison-Knudsen Engineering Company.

Kandahar (Height 3,500 ft., population 100,000): Kandahar, the capital of Ahmad Shah Durrani, is 125 miles from Quetta and only 70 miles from the railway terminus of New Chaman. It is, of course, a point of great commercial and strategical importance, and has played an important role in the history of the country. It is situated on a level and richly cultivated plain of Arachosia (or Arakosia) at the foot of Tarnak Valley, and is separated from the river of that name by a short range of hills which divides the lower part of the valley and runs parallel with the river for about twenty miles. These hills are called Torkani, that is, Black Stone, and attain a height of some 1,000 feet above the plain. The city of Kandahar is surrounded on two sides, north and west, by high, bare and sharp-pointed rocky mountains rising abruptly from the plain. They have very curious shapes and names and are called "The Elephant", "The Camel", "The Ant-Heap" etc., and indeed they deserve these names. The old city of Kandahar is large, populous and well planned. It is four-sided and rectangular in shape, 2,000 by 600 yards, the length being north to south. The streets are straight, wide and flanked by trees. It is an active commercial and industrial centre, and has undergone most radical changes during the last twenty years. If one walks along the main streets, one cannot recognise the Kandahar described by travellers of old. A new city with fine buildings and up-to-date facilities has sprung up outside the walled city of Kandahar on the road leading to Herat,

The Kandaharis are strikingly handsome—tall, strong and well-built, and are among the finest specimens of the human race. In winter they are peculiarly picturesque, wearing their Kosai, long heavy coats of white coarse felt richly decorated with gold and coloured embroidery, and curious cut-out lattice work at the end of the sleeves, which hang loosely to the ground. It would be worthwhile to make a close study of the traditional designs of these embroideries, which certainly go back to a very remote antiquity; solar emblems in the form of a cross or of a disc are particularly frequent.

Kandahar was the capital of Afghanistan during the palmy days of Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747—1773 A. D.), who had several times carried his arms victoriously into the plains of India, Persia and Bokhara. His mausoleum in Kandahar is an imposing structure. Its gilded dome is encompassed by beautiful minarets. It towers above the surrounding buildings and attracts the attention of travellers from a great distance.

Beyond the town, in the direction of Grishk, the ruins of Old Kandahar, destroyed by Nadir Shah Afshar, are to be seen. Here a curious relic of the past called the “Chihil-Zeena” (Forty Steps) also attracts the attention of the visitor. A steep staircase, roughly hewn into the face of a rock, leads to a little niche, called the Throne of Babur. Inside the niche there is a Persian inscription mentioning the name of that King and the date when he took Kandahar. It is a sort of victory memorial.

At Kohkaran, not far from the city, on the road leading to Herat, lies the tomb of the great Ghilzai hero, Mir Vais Hotaki, who led the rebellion of his tribe against Persian rule and made Kandahar independent by massacring Gurgin, the Persian governor of the province (1709 A.D.). Later on (in 1722)

his son and successor, Mir Mahmoud, led an expedition into the heart of Persia, took Isfahan and overthrew the Saffavid dynasty.

Further along the road leading to Grishk, and a few miles north of Kushk-i-Nakhud (halfway between Grishk and Kandahar) stands a beautiful column commemorating the crushing defeat sustained by the British army (under Major General Burrows) at the hands of Sardar Mohammad Ayoub Khan, son of Amir Sher Ali Khan (July 27, 1880), in the course of the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

Kandahar is also famous for its fine gardens and orchards. Of these mention should be made of Baba Wali and Sardeh, situated in the beautiful valley of Arghandab. Besides these places for excursions, the surrounding country of Kandahar is extremely rich in archæological remains, foremost among these being the ruins of Bust, lying west at the junction of the Arghandab and the Helmund. Relics of Lashkargah, the winter capital of Sultan Masoud, son of Sultan Mahmoud of Ghazni, are also located here. The foundation of a new modern city at Lashkargah, is laid close to it.

(6) Kandahar to Kala-i-Jadid (or Speen-Boldak) ; distance 65 miles : The road for a distance of 12 miles leads straight across a tolerably fertile and well-populated country. The bed of the Tarnak is crossed *en route*. After this the road, though level, is often broken into ravines, and fertility ceases. The road goes through a small pass, and then descends into the valley of Dori. Here all cultivation disappears. Even the water of the river, though abundant, is saline. Its banks are unfertile, and there is no grass and little cultivation. From Takhta-Pul (35 miles from Kandahar) onwards the road crosses a barren country

until it reaches Kala-i-Jadid (the New Fort), facing New Chaman, a terminus of the North-Western Railway. Here passports and luggage are examined.

Recently a new road was completed between Kandahar and Kala-i-Jadid. This road is broad and well-laid out, and the distance can now be easily covered within two hours by car.

(7) Kandahar to Herat (distance 407 miles): Herat the western most province of Afghanistan, is reached from Kandahar by way of Grishk, Farah and Sabzawar (or Sheen Dand). The road for the most part runs over a level but sandy plain; water is generally scarce.

(1) Kandahar to Grishk (75 miles): The road is generally level. Grishk lies at the distance of a mile on the right bank of the Helmund. The Helmund or Etamandros of the classical writers is the largest inland river of Afganistan. Numerous ruined cities and forts are to be seen all along the banks of the river, Bust and Lashkargah being the most important of these. Six miles from Kandahar the river Arghandab is crossed. Midway between Grishk and Kandahar, a few miles north of the present road, lies the historic plain of Maiwand. There are some charming gardens and orchards along the banks of the Helmund. Villages are numerous and every one is a thriving centre. The pasturage, too, is rich and abundant, and the agricultural capacity of the Zamindawar lands (70 miles north of Grishk along the Helmund) is well-known.

The Helmund, like most of the rivers of Afghanistan, has a seasonal flow. During early spring it rises in flood with the melting of the snow, and often attains a breadth of more than a mile. Recently the Afghan Government, with a view to

controlling the floods and utilising this surplus water, constructed a massive dam at Kajaki, some fifty miles north of Grishk, on the Helmund River. This new project will irrigate no less than 3,000,000 acres of waste land and has a capacity of generating 120,000 KW of electricity. A second Dam was constructed, some 25 miles north of Kandahar, on the Arghandab River. Besides storing water for irrigation during summer months this Dam has also a capacity of generating some 6,500 KW of electricity. These two dams, with the Boghra Canal, which are now nearly complete, will greatly enhance the material prosperity of the whole area. The work is carried on by a well-known American firm, Morrison-Knudsen by name.

Grishk is now the capital of the new province in the south-west of Afghanistan, covering the new irrigation areas served by this irrigation system.

(2) Grishk to Farah (158 miles. Grishk to Dilaram 75 miles, Dilaram to Farah 83 miles) : The road is generally level, lack of water is an unpleasant aspect of this route. *En route* lies the Bukwa Plain—a level stretch without trees or growth of any kind to break the monotony of the journey. Dilaram (Peace of Mind) is a small halting place *en route*.

Farah, the provincial capital, is 2,460 feet above sea-level, and lies 174 miles south of Herat. It is enclosed by a rampart, crowned with towers, and surrounded by a wide, deep ditch. Though much in ruins, its strategical importance is in no way diminished, as it commands the Kandahar—Herat route and the northern entrance to Seistan.

The province of Farah occupies the south-westerly corner of Afghanistan, and includes, besides Farah proper, the district

of Chakhansoor (or Scistan). It is mostly barren and unproductive, but in days which cannot be said to be very old, it was a prosperous country and had a fine system of irrigation. The Mughal depredations early in the 13th century A.D. wiped out these fine irrigation works, thus turning the smiling face of the country into a wilderness. The present Afghan Government is once more trying to irrigate these lands. The construction of the Kajaki Dam and the digging of the Boghra Canal are a part of this new programme. It is hoped that the Kajaki Dam will store sufficient water to increase the irrigation of Chakhansoor.

Farah to Sabzawar (94 miles): Three rivers—the Farah, Khash-Rud and the Harut are crossed *en route*. The banks of the Farah are covered with a jungle growth of tamarisk and mimosa. The country between Farah and Sabzawar is a vast jumble of ridges and low rolling hills, with small plains inhabited mostly by nomadic tribes.

Sabzawar (altitude 3,350 feet): This is an important post on the Herat-Kabul route, situated midway between Farah and Herat. It stands on the left bank of the Harut River, at the foot of an outlying spur of the Siah Koh (the Black Mountain). Beyond and partly surrounding it is a wide open plain, well-irrigated from the waters of the Harut, and it is in consequence highly productive.

Sabzawar to Herat (80 miles): Due north, and at a distance of 80 miles lies Herat, one of the most important cities of Afghanistan.

HERAT (Height 3,030 ft. above sea-level); population: 100,000, The town of Herat lies on the right bank of the Hari Rud (Arius of the classical writers). Its strategical and commercial importance is scarcely to be underrated, for here

converge the important routes from the Caspian, Merve, Bokhara, Maimanah, Kandahar and Meshed. The old city is still surrounded by massive mudwalls, and is guarded by a grim-looking citadel. Inside the walls Herat has changed a good deal, and the hand of progress is clearly felt. The old caravan bazaar has been replaced by neat rows of shops on both sides of long straight avenues. Modern buildings have sprung up everywhere, and the New Town (Shahr-i-Nao), outside the city, is progressing steadily.

The most important place in the old city is the citadel, standing in the centre of the town on a height towering over the rest of the city. From here a capital view is obtained of the country beyond. Of the original buildings of Iltikharuddin probably only the north-west corner tower remains. In later Timurid times it was covered with glazed tiles of which a few remain on the lower belt. The rest of the castle was rebuilt at the end of the 17th century.

The only other building in the city noticeable for its size and height is the Jama Masjid, a large, lofty, arched structure in the north-eastern portion of the city. Its original plan is very old; it was laid down by Ghiasuddin of Ghor. It was then one of the most beautiful mosques ever built in Asia, adorned as it was with most magnificent carvings, precious mosaics, and other elaborate and costly embellishments. Later repairs have not very much altered its austere lines. On the sides of the four "aiwans" gorgeous panellings of glazed tiles of the best Timurid workmanship, predominantly green and blue with the grandeur of their Arabic inscriptions, are still to be seen. In the corner of the central aiwan stands one of the treasures of Herat—a huge bronze cauldron of exquisite Timurid workmanship. Its shape,

the delicate carving of the Persian inscriptions, and its soft green patina are beyond praise.

There is no more glorious period in the history of Muslim architecture than that of the Timurids of the fifteenth century. It has been properly called the "Renaissance of Art in the East". This brilliant renaissance with its centre in Herat was not surpassed by a similar "Rebirth" in Europe which followed the Dark Ages. The greatest painter of this period was Kamaluddin Bihzad, who worked at the Court of Sultan Hussain (1469-1506 A.D.), and painted two portraits of the Sultan, which are generally regarded as his master-pieces. Similarly, his miniatures most of which are preserved in the British Museum, have world-wide fame.

Besides paintings and miniature, other fine arts also attained high perfection under the patronage of the Timurids. Never were the glazed tiles and faience mosaics made in greater perfection, or employed to greater advantage. The main features of the style are the huge-vaulted arches, the melon-shaped domes and the minarets, all faced with vari-coloured tiles and calligraphic ornamentations. Of palaces, and other royal residences, few examples remain, and only a few minarets, shrines, a mosque and a college are all that have survived the ravages of time.

It was the Timurides who gave the first real impetus to miniature painting. During the reign of Shah Rukh (1405-1447 A.D.), Baisunqar Mirza founded an academy in Herat in which the arts of painting, book-binding, especially miniature-painting, and calligraphy were zealously studied and encouraged. This academy attained its most flourishing period under Sultan Hussain Baiqara, patron of the most famous miniaturist and painter, Bihzad.



At the north of the town, in a grove of umbrella pines, lies the Gaz-ir-Gah Sharif, the resting place of Hazrat Khwaja Abdullah Ansar, a well-known Muslim divine and Sufi-poet. The shrine is distinguishable from afar by a huge lofty square-topped mass of building over a high arch. This shrine is well worth a visit, for it displays the art of glazed tiles of all possible shades and patterns, all of them gorgeous and yet full of delicate taste. The great aiwan, tiled from top to bottom, shows traces of Chinese influence in the arrangement of Kufi characters. Timurlane (Tamerlane) died before he could begin the conquest of China, but the craftsmen he attracted from China to Samarkand have had a great influence in certain manifestations of Timurid art—miniature painting in particular. Among the many beautiful carved tombstones of the courtyard one notices a great rectangular blockstone. This is the tomb of Shah Rukh, carved in the intricate flower pattern, peculiar to the Herat School, in the style called Haft-Qalam, which means that the stone is carved on seven different planes.

But the jewel of Herat is the Mussalla, a group of beautiful buildings outside the city, now in ruins. It consisted of three buildings running north-east and south-west, and covering a distance of six hundred yards from end to end. Of the eastern building, known generally as the Madressah or College, nothing but four minarets remain. The arches, covered with the remains of what once was fine tile work of the most beautiful and artistic design, are now much defaced. The tiles on the minarets, too, have mostly been worn off by the vagaries of weather, but inside the arches the beautiful mosaic work is still in many places almost perfect sufficient to give an idea of the splendour of the building when new. The minarets of the Madressah are taller than the rest, and are about 150 feet in height. Up to the late

nineties, the Mussalla stood in fairly good condition and, only during the political scare following the "Panjdeh Incident" did Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, under the advice of British engineers, pull it down for strategic reasons. Recently one of the remaining minarets also fell to the ground.

Between the Madressah and the Mussalla is a domed building. This is the tomb of Gohar Shad, the gifted Queen of Shah Rukh. The melon-shaped ribbed dome of the tomb is covered with tiles of wonderful turquoise-blue. If one sees it at sunset under the slanting rays of the sun, it is rather difficult to forget it. There are still enough tiles left on the minarets to give an idea of the techniques of those palmy days. It is a kind of cloisonne work, the partition being of white marble with scrolls of text from the Quran filled up with coloured tiles.

If, after seeing the Mussallah, the visitor could take a look at some of the paintings of Bihzad, he might begin to understand what the Herat of Hussain Baiqara was like. In the course of a few generations, the race of Tamerlane had lost the savage energy of its founder, and devoted themselves zealously to the advancement of arts and crafts. So powerful was the impetus derived from the Timurids that it lasted through a greater portion of the sixteenth century, and influenced Persia under the Saffavids, and India under the Mughals. Babur, who visited Herat shortly before the crumbling of the Timurid Empire under the onslaught of the Uzbek Shaibani Khan, has described in vivid terms the court of Sultan Hussain Baiqara. This description might best be summarised by paraphrasing the famous saying of Talleyran: "He who has not lived in the Herat of Hussain Baiqara, does not know the joy of life". India must not forget that the best that the great Emperors of the House of Timur have

brought her in the way of art and civilization has been inspired by the Herat of Hussain Baiqra.

Herat is also noted for the beauty of its gardens. The most important of these are: Takht-i-Safar, Bagh-i-Shahi, Bagh-i-Kurta, Bagh-i-Rubat-i-Ghorian, Bagh-i-Maulana Jami, and Bagh-i-Qalicha. A great variety of game—deer, pheasants, partridges, markhor, hare and various kinds of birds are found along the mountain sides and in the neighbouring plains. Water fowls are abundant at Rubat-i-Ghorian, Kolijang and Ab-i-Jalil.

Other places of interest in the province are: Kaminij, Dar-i-Takht, Obek, Saioshan and Badghisat. Of the natural beauty of the last mentioned locality it is said that Nasr II, the Samanid Prince of Bokhara (913-943) once happened to visit the place. He was so charmed by it that he would not quit it for full two years. The courtiers then approached Rudaki, the Poet-Laureate, to induce the King to return to Bokhara. At the request of the courtiers, Rudaki improvised a poem and when he recited it before the Prince, it is said, that Nasr was so moved that he came down from the throne, mounted the horse of a sentinel on duty and set off for Bokhara in such haste that he did not even care to put on his boots. The poem runs thus :

The Ju-i-Muliyān we call to mind,  
 We long for those dear friends long left behind ;  
 The sands of Oxus, toilsome though they may be,  
 Beneath my feet were soft as silk to me.  
 Glad at the return of friends, the Oxus deep  
 Up to our girths the laughing waves shall leap.  
 Long live Bokhara ! Be thou of good cheer !  
 Joyous towards thee hasteth our Amir.  
 The moon's the Prince, Bukhara is the sky ;

O sky ! the Moon shall light thee by and by.  
 Bokhara is the mead, the cypress he ;  
 Receive at last, O Mead, the cypress tree.

From Herat a road leads to the Iranian border. This road running due west leads *via* Ghorian (Zindajan or Phooshanj of old) to Islam Qala (old name : Kafir Qala), facing Yusufabad and Karez, Iranian border posts. The distance between Herat and the Persian border is a little less than 100 miles.

Kabul to Gardez : (80 miles) The road *via* Charasia, Mohammad-Agha and Hissarak (all in the Lohgar valley) leads to the Altamur Pass. There is a steep ascent, and the road skirts difficult hills, often blocked with snow during winter months. After crossing the Pass there is a steady descent till Gardez is reached.

Gardez is an important strategical town of Southern Afghanistan and guards the roads from Urgan, Khost, Ghazni and Lohgar. It is the provincial capital. From here roads radiate in different directions ; one goes to Khost, another leads to Ghazni, a third to Urgan, a fourth to Chamkani, and a fifth to Jaji country bordering the Kurram valley.

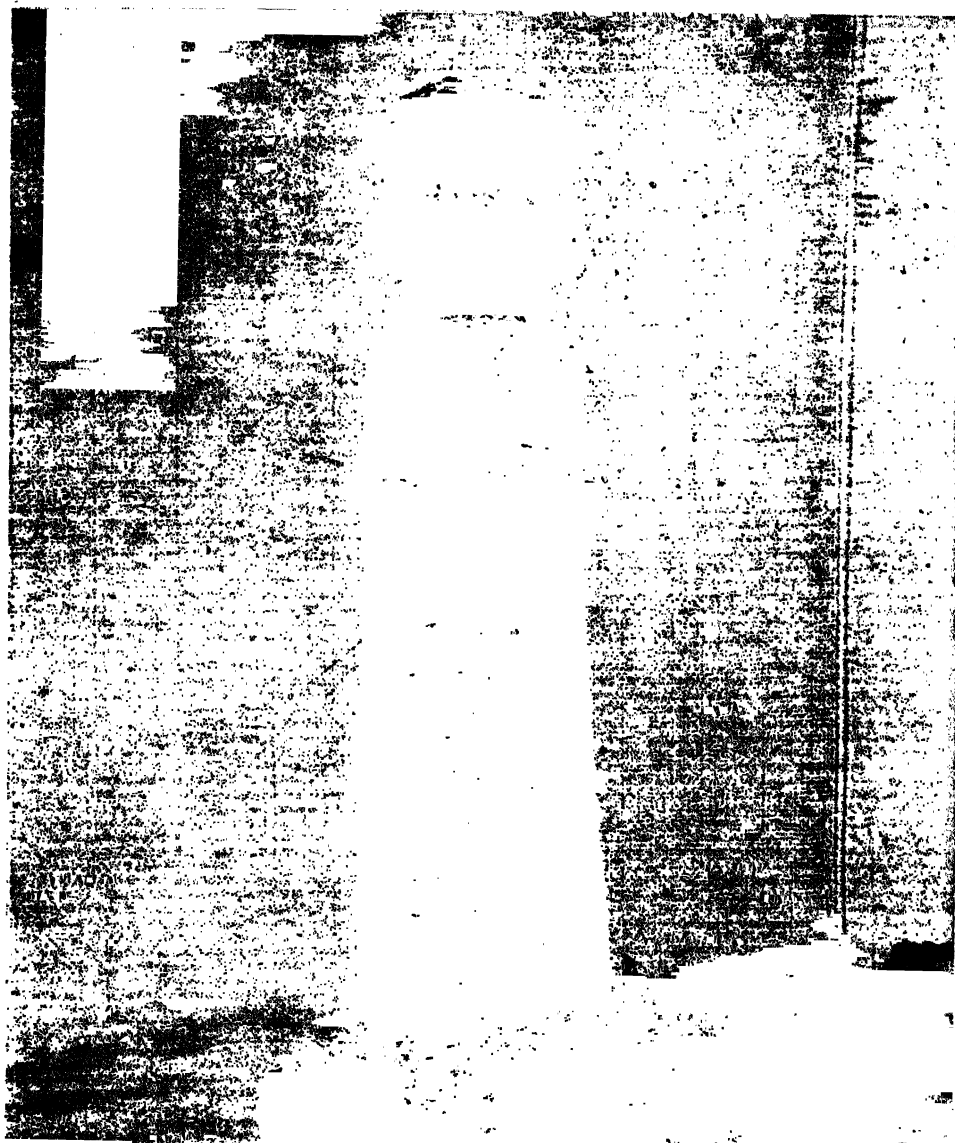
## Distances of Important Places from Kabul (in English miles)

|                            |     |     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Kabul to Baghlan           | ... | ... | 274 |
| Balkh                      | ... | ... | 401 |
| Bamian                     | ... | ... | 145 |
| Charikar                   | ... | ... | 40  |
| Faizabad                   | ... | ... | 460 |
| Farah                      | ... | ... | 528 |
| Gardez                     | ... | ... | 80  |
| Ghazni                     | ... | ... | 90  |
| Girishk                    | ... | ..  | 390 |
| Gul Bahar                  | ... | ... | 50  |
| Herat, <i>via</i> Kandahar | ... | ... | 722 |
| Istaliff                   | ... | ... | 33  |
| Jabalus-Seradj             | ... | ... | 45  |
| Jalalabad                  | ... | ... | 90  |
| Kandhar                    | ... | ... | 315 |
| Khanabad                   | ... | ... | 323 |
| Kanduz                     | ... | ... | 339 |
| Maimanah, <i>via</i> Mazar | ... | ... | 607 |
| Mazar-i-Sharif             | ... | ... | 389 |
| Mukur                      | ... | ... | 158 |
| Paghman                    | ... | ... | 18  |

## PART—EIGHT

Chronology of Important Events connected with the history of  
Afghanistan(I) *Pre-Islamic Period* :

- c. 3000 B.C. : First settlement of the Aryans at Bakhdi (modern Balkh). We do not know much about the original home of the Aryans. Bactrai, Chinese Turkestan, the Pamirs, Germany, the plains of the Middle Danube, the Steppes of Southern Russia and even Western Siberia have all been suggested as the original habitat of these Indo-European races. According to Avesta, this original home of the Aryans (Aryana-Vaejo as it is called) was a region of delight, a kind of earthly paradise. Some geological convulsions changed the climate of this country, and the primeval happy home of the Aryans became suddenly very cold and sullen, which induced the migration of the Aryans to neighbouring countries. According to other traditions, the original home of the Aryans (Arya-Vesta, Arya-Varstha or Arya-Versha, as it is variously called, meaning the Abode of Honourable Men) seems to be the country watered by the Oxus and the Murghab, and bounded by the Caspian Sea on the west, the Hindukush on the south, the Kailas range on the east and the Kizil-Kum and other sandy deserts on the north. It was at Bakhdi, northern Afghanistan, that the Aryan



**Munar-i-Chakari, near Kabul.  
Reminiscence of pre-Islamic days.**



**Afghan Architecture of the Mediaeval Muslim period.**



settlers for the first time took to a settled life and laid the foundation of a rudimentary form of democratic government (about 3000 B.C.)

- c. 2500 to      General migration of the Aryans from Northern
- c. 1500 B. C.    Afghanistan to India, Media, Fars and other parts  
of the world.
- ..
- c. 2000 to      Rigvedic hymns composed in the Indus valley.
- c. 1400 B. C. :    The Indo-Aryans at the time when the hymns of  
Rigveda arose had not yet spread over the plains  
of Northern India ; rather we find them still  
domiciled in the valleys of the Indus Basin.  
That the home of the Indo-Aryans at the time of  
the composition of the early hymns of the  
Rigveda was the region indicated above is  
further borne out (1) by topographical  
consideration, foremost among these being the  
names of the rivers mentioned in the Rigveda,  
such as the Kubha (Kabul), the Suwasti (Swat),  
the Krumu (Kurram) the Gomati (Gomal) and  
the Sindhu (Indus) ; and (2) by climatic con-  
siderations and the flora and fauna of the  
country mentioned in these poems. The animal  
and plant worlds of Rigveda are quite differ-  
ent from those of India.
- c. 1000 B.C. :    It was during the reign of Gustasp (about 1000  
B.C.) that legends place the death of Spitama  
Zarathushtra, whom we speak of as Zardusht or  
Zoroaster, and whom most of the classical and  
Oriental writers agree was a native of Bactria  
(modern Balkh).

- 745-725 B.C : Tiglath-Pilser II, King of Assyria extends his empire to Arakosia (Arachosia, modern Kandahar).
- 577 B.C : Birth of Sidhartha or Gautama Buddha. The sixth century B.C. is indeed a most remarkable epoch in the world's history. It sees spiritual renovation in countries as far apart as Greece, Palestine, India, China and Persia. In India there appears a great teacher and reformer, who revolutionizes the religious thought and feeling not only of India but of the Central and Eastern Asian countries as well. Buddhism finds its way to Afghanistan in the middle of the third century B.C., during the reign of Asoka the Great.
- 558 B.C : Cyrus (Kai-Khusro or Kurush), King of Fars, lays the foundation of the Achaemenid Empire.
- 549-545 B. C : Cyrus is occupied with the conquest of Aryana (Ancient Afghanistan). He is finally killed in one of these battles (529 B.C.)
- 518 B. C. Darius Hystaspes (or Drayavush Vishtasp) King of Fars, ventures further eastwards than Cyrus and conquers the right bank of the Indus.
- 517 B. C : Skylax, the Greek, explores the lower course of the Indus.
- 480 B. C : The Indus valley practically becomes independent on the defeat of Xerxes by the Greeks.
- 336 B. C : Accession to the throne of Alexander the Great.
- 334 B. C : Alexander in pursuit of his father's plan launches his attack and crosses the Hellespont (now Dardanelles) into Asia Minor.

- 334-333 B. C : Alexander conquers Asia Minor.
- 333 B. C : The Battle of Arbela. Darius is again defeated and intends to take refuge in distant Bactria.
- 330 B. C : Alexander decides to pursue the hapless Persian monarch into Aryana. Bessus, the governor of Bactria, availing of the opportunity, assumes the title of Great King and makes a prisoner of the Persian king. Alexander makes a supreme effort to come to his assistance. But in the vicinity of Damaghan he comes across a wagon containing the dead body of the luckless monarch.
- At Susia (Tus) Satibarzanes, the Satrap of Aeria (modern Herat) tenders his submission and is reappointed as the governor of the province.
- 328 B. C : Alexander marches through Aeria, Prophthasia (now Farah) Drangiana or Zarangiana (modern Seistan) and Arachosia (the Kandahar Province) where he lays the foundation of another Alexandria (Probably modern city of Kandahar). He then turns towards the north following the route to Kabul and comes to the foot of the Hindu-kush (in the vicinity of Charikar or Jabalus-Seradj) where he founds the city of Alexandria ad Caucasum, which he garrisons with Macedonian colonists.
- 328 B. C. Early in 328 B. B., Alexander crosses the Hindukush into Bactria. Crossing the lofty range, the Macedonian army suffers great losses on

account of cold and scarcity of supplies, especially fuel. Alexander pursues Bessus across the Oxus. Bessus is finally betrayed by Apitamenes, commander of the Sogdian cavalry, and is handed over to Alexander. He is then put to death in a most cruel and barbarous manner.

Alexander advances as far as the Jaxartes, where he founds Alexandria Eschate, the modern Khojend.

327 B. C. Alexander returns to Bactria, where he begins preparations for the projected expedition into India.

326 B. C. Alexander crosses the Indus into India near modern Attock and receives the submission of Ambhi, King of Taxila (spring 326 B.C.). Leaving Taxila, Alexander marches towards the Hydaspes (the Jhelum) where Porus, King of the Punjab, makes a bold stand. Finally he is defeated and made a prisoner. Alexander, displaying generosity to the captured monarch, restores him to his power. Alexander marches ahead with the intention of attacking another monarch more powerful than Porus. All his attempts to induce his soldiers to proceed further proves ineffectual. He therefore gives order for retreat and returns to his newly-founded cities of Nicae and Bucephala on the Hydaspes. He sails down to the mouth of the Indus, and thence proceeds towards Persia through the burning deserts of Gedrosia (Baluchistan).

The march through this inhospitable region lasts sixty days, during which many of the soldiers perish from fatigue or disease.

- 324 B. C. : Alexander reaches Babylonia, where ambassadors from various countries assemble to pay him homage. His mind is still occupied with plans of conquests. His next design is the subjugation of Arabia. Preparations are made. Suddenly he is taken ill with fever and dies on the 28th of June, 323 B.C., at the early age of 33.
- 321 B. C. Second partition of the Macedonian Empire ; Seleucus Nicator obtains Babylon, Syria, Persia and Aryana.
- 320 B. C. Chandragupta Maurya lays the foundation of a powerful kingdom in Northern India.
- 317 B. C. Eudamus, Greek governor, withdraws from the Indus valley and Chandragupta makes himself master of the Punjab.
- 305-302 B. C. Seleucus, in his eagerness to equal his former master, crosses the Indus into India. But he is defeated by Chandragupta and has to return home after concluding a hasty peace, by which he surrenders the provinces of Parapomisadae, Arachosia, Gedrosia and a part of Aeria to the Indian monarch and receives only 500 war elephants in exchange for all these concessions.
- 298 B. C. Accession of Bhindusara, son of Chandragupta, to the Mauryan throne. During his reign his

son Asoka is appointed Viceroy of Northern India.

- 272 B. C.      • Accession of Asoka to the Mauryan throne.
- c. 250 B. C.    Bactria and Parthia assert their independence. Diododotus I, Governor of Bactria, lays the foundation of the Græco-Bactrian Kingdom at Balkh.
- c. 240-230 B. C. Diodotus II rules over Bactria and Sogdiana.
- 232 B. C.      Death of Asoka ; break-up of the Mauryan Empire begins.
- c. 227-189 B. C. Eutheydemus, King of Aryana.
- 212-206 B. C.    About 212 B. C., Antiochus III appears in the east at the head of a large army determined to reassert the Selucid supremacy over the rebellious kingdoms of Parthia and Bactria. After reducing Parthia he turns his arms against Bactria (208 B. C.). After a siege of two years he is forced to conclude a peace and give his daughter in marriage to Demetrius, son of Eutheydemus.
- 206 B. C.      Eutheydemus avails himself of the break-up of the Mauryan Empire and conquers the whole of Eastern and Southern Afghanistan.
- c. 189-167 B. C. Demetrius, King of Aryana, extends his empire as far as Pataliputra and Malwa and adopts the proud title of "Invinctus," that is Invincible, and "King of the Indians".
- c. 167 B. C.    Eucratides wrests power from Demetrius, first in Bactria and then in Parapomisadae. Ultimately he sustains a crushing defeat at the hands of

Menander, one of Demetrius' generals, when he penetrates the Punjab.

- c. 147-130 B. C. Helicoles, son of Eucratides is the last Græco-Bactrian king to rule over Bactria. He is defeated by the Scythians, and crossing the Hindukush (in 135 B. C.) comes to Capisia, where he lays the foundation of a new kingdom destined to last for another century.
- c. 175 B. C., Inundation of the wild hordes from the north begins with full force. The Huns defeat the Yuch-chi, living in the western corner of Kan-su province. The Yuch-chi, thus dislodged from their original home, come into conflict with other tribes, such as the Wu-sun, inhabiting the valley of Illi, and the Scythians, living north of the Jaxartes. The Scythians unable to stem the tide cross the river and enter Aryana. A second wave drives them forward and they enter Bactria (135 B. C.). The flower of the Bactrian nobles fall fighting and the remnants cross the Hindukush and come to Capisia.
- 140-130 B. C. The Yueh-chi, driving the Scythians westward, occupy the whole of Northern Afghanistan.
- 85-80 B. C. Maucs, one of the Scythian kings, conquers Taxila.
- 20-30 A. D. Kingdoms of Arachosia and Taxila are united under one rule by Gondophernes.
- 35 A. D. Conquest of Kabul valley by Gondophernes.
- 40 A. D. Visit of St. Thomas, the Apostle, to the court of Gondophernes.

- c. 40. A. D. Kajula Kadphises lays the foundation of the Kushan dynasty in Northern Afghanistan.
- c. 40-78 A. D. Kajula Kadphises takes Gandhara and Taxila.
- c. 78-110 A. D. Vima Kadphises takes the whole of northern India as far as Benares, in the east, and the mouth of the Indus, in the west.
- c. 110-120 A. D. Sorter Megasthenes (the Great Saviour) rules over India.
- c. 120-160 A. D. Kanishka the Great, the third Kushan king, extends his authority over the whole of Northern India as far as Ghazipur and Vindhya Hills. In the north he wages successful wars against China and the wild tribes of Central Asia. Buddhism makes rapid progress throughout his kingdom. The Mahayana School comes into being.
- c. 160-182 A. D. Huvishka, Kanishka's son and successor.
- c. 182-220 A. D. Vasudeva, the last king of the dynasty. The break-up of the Kushan Empire begins with his death.
- 220-425 A. D. A period of chaos and anarchy. Kidara Shahi establishes the kingdom of the Little Kushans.
- 226 A.D. Ardsher-Babagan founds the Sassanian dynasty of Persia, which lasts till the middle of the 7th century.
- 319 A. D. Chandragupta I lays the foundation of the Gupta dynasty in India.
- 405-411 A. D. Fa-Hien, the Chinese traveller, visits India.



- 425 A. D.      Invasions of the Ephthalites. They establish a powerful kingdom in Central Asia extending from the Caspian Sea to the confines of China. Bahram Gore of Persia comes into conflict with the Ephthalites near Merv. The Ephthalites are defeated at first and their king, probably Ifathilia is slain. Shortly afterwards, under Mehrpur, they repair their losses and are in a position to assume the offensive. They inflict a crushing defeat on the Persians. Later Akhshnur (or Khushnavaz, as he is sometimes called) defeats Firoz, the Persian king, who sues for terms and gives his daughter in marriage to Akhshnur. He also promises to pay tribute and war indemnity.
- Akhshnur is succeeded by his viceroy, Toramana, a remarkable warrior, who conquers the whole of northern and central India.
- 502 A. D.      Death of Toramana and accession of Mihiragula, (or Mihirakula) the last of the line. His death in 542 A. D. shatters the fabric of the Ephthalite Empire and Afghanistan once more faces anarchy and chaos.
- 520 A. D.      Sung Yun, the Chinese pilgrim, visits Gandhara.
- 553-649 A. D.      The Western Turks or Tuokieus make themselves masters of north-eastern Afghanistan. They are soon ousted by the Chinese.
- 629-645 A.D.      Hsuan-Tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim, visits Afghanistan and India.

- 719 A.D. The revival of the petty kingdoms called Kushano-Ephthalites in various parts of the country. One of these was Ratbils (called variously Ranbils, Tegin Shahi, Turki Shahi, etc.). The first king of this line, according to Chinese sources, was Tele (Telete or Tekin). Al-Beruki, the great Mohammedan traveller, geographer, philosopher and historian, calls the first king of this line by the name of Beratagin. Again according to him the last king of the line is Lakatorman, who is dethroned by his minister, Kalar, an influential Brahman.
- c. 850 A.D. Kalar lays the foundation of a new dynasty variously called Brahamanshahi, Kabul Shahi, Hindu Shahi and Rayans of Kabul.
- c. 871 A.D. The Kabul Shah (Santa Deva) is made to quit Kabul at the hands of Yakub bin Laith, the founder of the Saffarid dynasty in Seistan. He makes Gardez, in southern Afganistan, his new capital. This, too, is quite a little later when Amro bin Laith leads an expedition into Lohgar and destroys the famous temple at Sakawand (now Sejawand). The Kabul Shahans then move towards the Indus basin and establish their headquarters at Uhind, some 16 miles north of Attock.
- 570 A.D. Birth of Mohammed, or the "Praised One", at Mecca.
- 622 A.D. The Hijrat, or the "Flight of the Prophet", from Mecca to Yathreb (now Medina).

- 632 A.D.      Death of the great Prophet (Monday, 8th June, 632 A.D.).
- 632-634 A.D.      Caliphate of Abu Bakr.
- 634-644 A.D.      Caliphate of Omar.
- 636 A.D.      Battle of Kadessia decides the fate of both Chaldaea and Mesopotamia.
- 637 A.D.      Capture of Madain (Ctesiphon), the Persian capital, by the Arabs.
- 642 A.D.      Battle of Nehavand, called the "Victory of Victories" decides the fate of the Sassanian Empire. Yezdjard, the last king of the dynasty, takes refuge in Khurasan. A contingent of the Arabs, led by Ahnif bin Qais, follows him into that country. Yezdjard is again defeated near Merv. He flees to Tokharistan (now Kataghan) and appeals to the Chinese Emperor for help in his struggle against the Arabs. The Chinese Emperor however is in no mood to send his forces such long distances. In his despair the fugitive monarch comes to Balkh, where he makes his last stand. His forces are again routed and he takes refuge in the Murghab basin, where a little later (in 651 A.D.) he is killed by a millman for his fine apparel.
- 652 A.D.      Abdulla bin Amir, one of the famous Arab generals, leads an expedition into Khorasan. He makes Nishapur his headquarters from where he sends expeditions in various directions. One under Rabi bin Zayad comes to Herat ; a second under Abdur Rahman bin Samarah makes for

- Seistan. From Seistan Abdur Rahman advances into Zamindawar, where in a temple devoted to the Sun-god (at Zur or Zuz) he comes across an idol of pure gold with eyes of ruby.
- 698 A.D. Abdulla bin Abu Bakr comes with a large force towards Kabul, but soon finds himself encircled by his enemies and ultimately is allowed to return on payment of 700,000 dinars.
- 700 A.D. Hajjaj bin Yusif sends a contingent of 10,000 men under Abdur Rahman bin Ashas to reduce Kabul. A severe winter with heavy snow-fall causes Abdur Rahman to sue for peace and return with all haste. This is perhaps the last attempt of the Arabs in this direction.
- 820-872 A.D. The Tahirids.  
Abdulla bin Tahir Zulyamin dying in 844 during the reign of Mustasim, the Abbasid Caliph leaves his province (Herat) in the hands of his son, Tahir II, who receives the investiture as of right.  
The last king of this line is Mohammed (862—872).
- 867-903 A.D. The Saffarids.  
In 867 the famous Yakub, son of Laith, the Coppersmith, conquers Seistan from the Tahirids and lays the foundation of the Saffarid dynasty.
- 872 A.D. Yakub drives Mohammed, the grandson of Tahir, out of Khurasan and extends his power over the whole of Persia and Afghanistan. He invades Iraq, but is defeated with heavy losses.

He dies in 878 and is succeeded by his brother, Amro bin Laith, who rules until 900.

903 A.D.

Tahir is the last king of this line. The dynasty comes to an end at the hands of the Samanids of Bukhara in 903 A.D.

.874-999 A.D.

The Samanids.

The sixth prince of this line, Abdul Malik, has a Turkish slave, Alaptagin by name. He is appointed governor of Khurasan. On the death of his patron in 961, the chief officers of the State assemble to nominate a successor. Alaptagin votes against Mansur, the minor son of the deceased Sultan, who, whoever, ascends the throne by securing the majority of votes in his favour. Whereupon Alaptagin, finding his life in danger, escapes to Ghazni, in the heart of Afghanistan, where he is able to lay the foundation of the famous Ghaznavid dynasty.

977-997 A.D.

Subaktagin, the fifth ruler of this line, extends his frontiers to the Oxus in the north and approximately to the present boundary between Persia and Afghanistan in the west. He also defeats Jaipal twice and occupies the whole of the Peshawar valley.

998-1030 A.D.

Mahmud, son of Subaktagin, is an able and energetic ruler. He invades India no less than 12 times. The second from the last expedition is directed against the celebrated temple of Somanath, on the east coast of Kathiawar. Besides being a great conqueror Mahmud is a patron of art and learning.

- 1186 A.D.           The dynasty comes to an end in 1186 at the hands of Mohammed Ghorī. The last king of the line is Khusro Malik.
- 1137-1157  
A.D.           The Seljuks. The last king of this dynasty, Sultan Sanjar, is defeated and captured by the Ghuzz in 1153.
- 1148-1215  
A.D.           The Ghōris.

Founder : Izud-din Hussain.

Saif-ud-din Suri, son of Izud-din, takes Ghazni in 1148. Bahram Shah Ghaznavi enters Ghazni in 1149 and kills Saif-ud-din, whereupon for the deceased brother's sake Alaud-din, nick-named Jahan Suz (World Burner) captures Ghazni and burns it to ashes. The seat of the Ghaznavids is then shifted permanently to Lahore, where they remain in power until 1186.

Shahab-ud-din Mohammed, or as he is more commonly called, Mohammed Ghorī, a nephew of the World Burner, is chiefly famous for his Indian expeditions. He is also considered as the real founder of the Muslim rule in India. After his death, Qutb-ud-din Aibak, his viceroy in India, ascends the throne as the first Mohammedan king of Delhi.

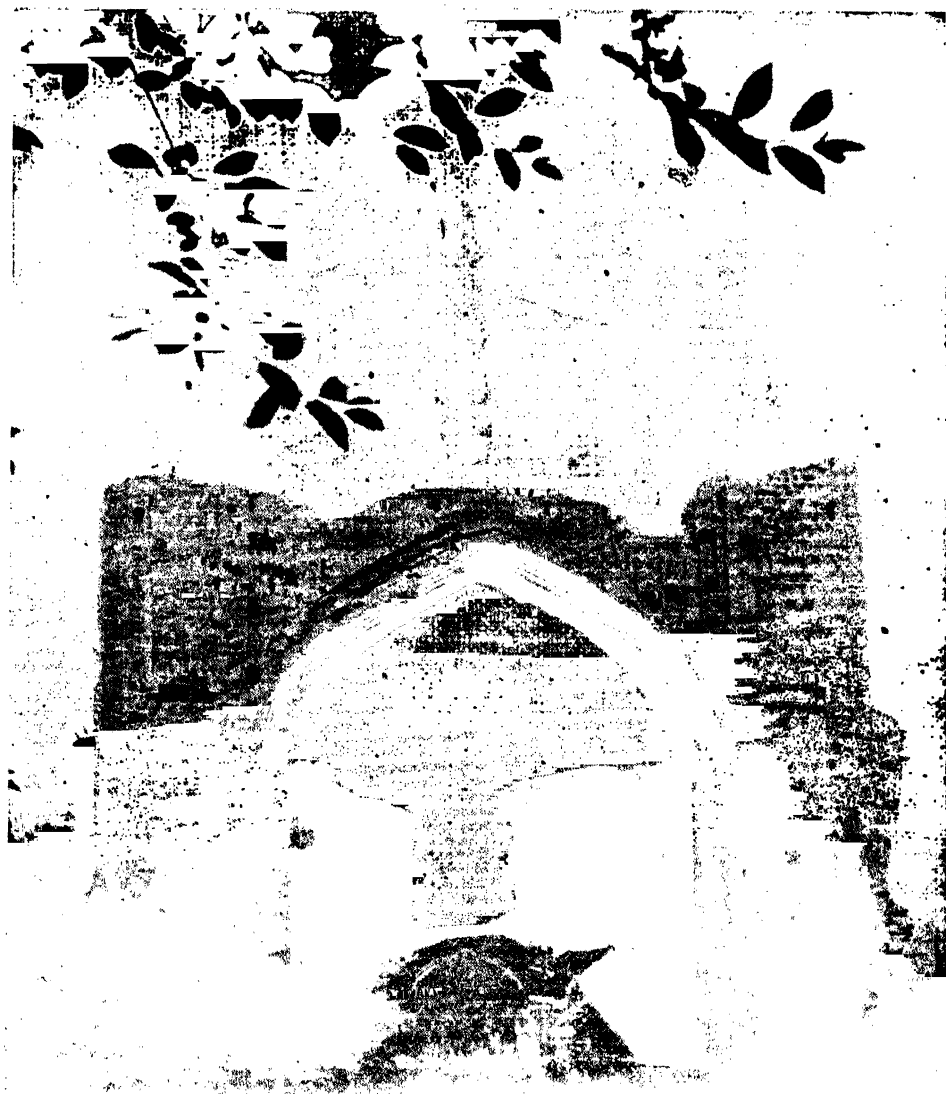
After the death of Mohammed Ghorī in 1206 and that of his brother, Ghias-ud-din Mohammed, shortly after, the power of the Ghoris declines rapidly. Mohammed dying in 1210 is succeeded by his son Badar-ud-din Sam.

- 1215            The Ghorī dynasty comes to an end. Ghor is occupied by Alaud-din Mohammed Khwarizmshah, who in turn is defeated by Changiz Khan and driven out of Central Asia.
- 1218            Changiz Khan invades Transoxiana.
- 1220            Death of Mohammed Khwarizmshah in the Island of Ab-i-Sukkon.
- 1221            Jalalud-din Munkabirni, son of Mohammed Khwarizmshah, defeats the Mongols at Parwan Darah, 45 miles north of Kabul.
- 1226            Destruction of Herat at the hands of the Mongols.
- 1227            Death of Changiz Khan.
- 1227-1241      Ogotoy, son of Changiz, rules as the Great Khan (Ka-an).
- 1241-1246      Turakina Khatun rules as a Regent.
- 1246-1248      Giyuk is the Great Khan of the Mongols.
- Upon the death of Giyuk in 1248, Mangu, the son of Tulu, is elected the Great Khan. He appoints his brother Kublai to rule the conquered provinces of China, where he founds the Yuen dynasty; while another brother, Halaku, is appointed ruler of Persia. He destroys the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 and lays the foundation of a new dynasty in Persia known as the Ill-Khans (Local-Khans).
- 1271-1295      The journey of Marco-Polo through Asia.
- 1325-1353      Journeys of Shaikh Abu Abdullah, generally known as Ibn Batuta in Asia. He visits Balkh,

Herat, Nishapur, Kunduz, Kabul and Ghazni.  
THE TIMURIDS

- 1336 .Timur-i-Lang (Tamerlane) is born at Kish.
- 1389 Tamerlane overthrows the Kurt dynasty of Herat.
- 1398 Tamerlane sacks Delhi.
- 1402 Defeat of Bayazid, the "Thunderbolt" at the hands of Tamerlane near Ankara.
- 1405 Tamerlane dies at Otrar.
- 1405-1519 The Timurids of Herat.
- 1405-1447 (1) Shah Rukh, son of Tamerlane, rules over a great part of central Asia from his capital at Herat. He is a great patron of arts and learning. His queen, Gohar Shad Agha, is also an accomplished lady and builds mosques and colleges. Herat becomes a great seat of learning.
- 1447-1449 (2) Ulugh Beg succeeds his father. He, too, is a talented member of this family. The encouragement he gives to his favourite science, astronomy, has preserved his name as the author of an accurate and complete astronomical table known by the name of Ulugh Beg's Zich.
- 1449-1450 (3) Abdul Latif.
- 1452-1467 (4) Abu Saide.
- 1467-1504 (5) Sultan Hussain Bayaqla is a patron of scholars. He is the last great king of this line. His minister, Alisher Nawai, is also an accomplished scholar.





A part of Lashkargah, the winter capital of Sultan Masud (1030-1040 A.D.)



**The famous statue of Buddha at Bamian, 53 Meters in height.**

1504-1506 (6) Badi-uz Zaman.

1506-1519 (7) Muzafar Hussain.

The dynasty comes at an end at the hand of Mohammed Khan Shihani.

### THE AFGHAN KINGS OF INDIA

1206-1290 A.D. (1) The Mamluks.

1290-1321 (2) The Khiljis.

1321-1414 (3) The Tughluks

1414-1451 (4) The Sayids

1450-1526 (5) The Lodis

1540-1555 (6) The Suris

1526-1858 (7) The Mughals

1526-1530 (1) Zahir-ud Din Babar takes Kabul in 1504 and makes it the seat of his government. He defeats Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526 and enters Delhi triumphantly, where he lays the foundation of the Mughal dynasty in India.

1530-1540 (2) Nasir-ud Din Humayun, son of Babar, is defeated by Sher Shah Suri first at Buxar (1529) and then at Kanuj (1540). Humayun then quits India and Sher Shah, ascending the throne of Delhi, lays the foundation of the Suri dynasty.

1555-1566 Humayun profits by the confusion and anarchy prevailing in India after Sher Shah's death and occupies Delhi and Agra a second time.

- |           |                                                           |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1556-1605 | (3) Jalalud Din Akbar                                     |
| 1605-1627 | (4) Nur-ud Din Jehangir                                   |
| 1627-1658 | (5) Shahab-ud Din Shah Jehan                              |
| 1658-1707 | (6) Mohi-ud Din Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals. |
- (For the chronology of the later period 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, please refer to Part Four "An Historical Sketch".)

## PART NINE

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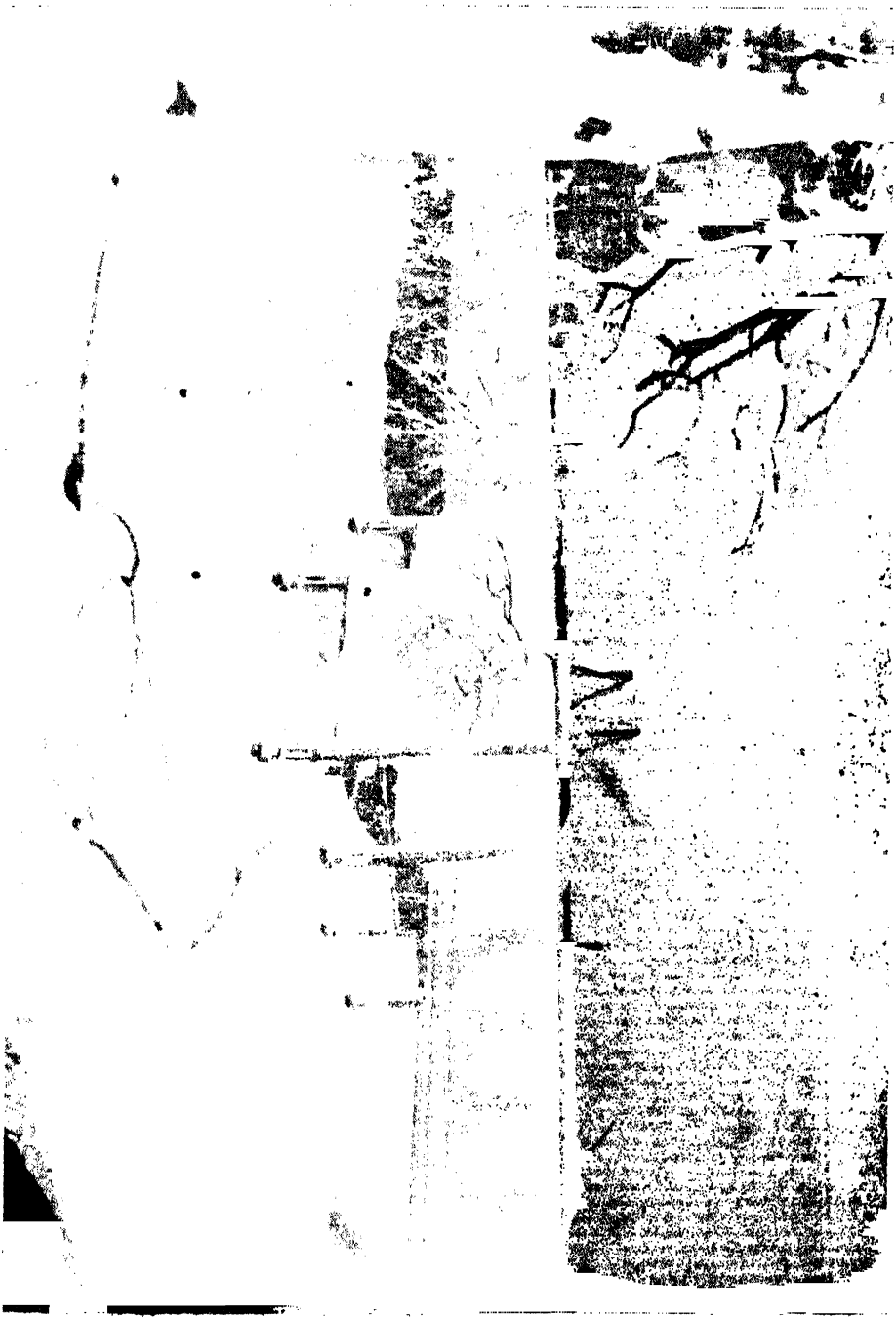
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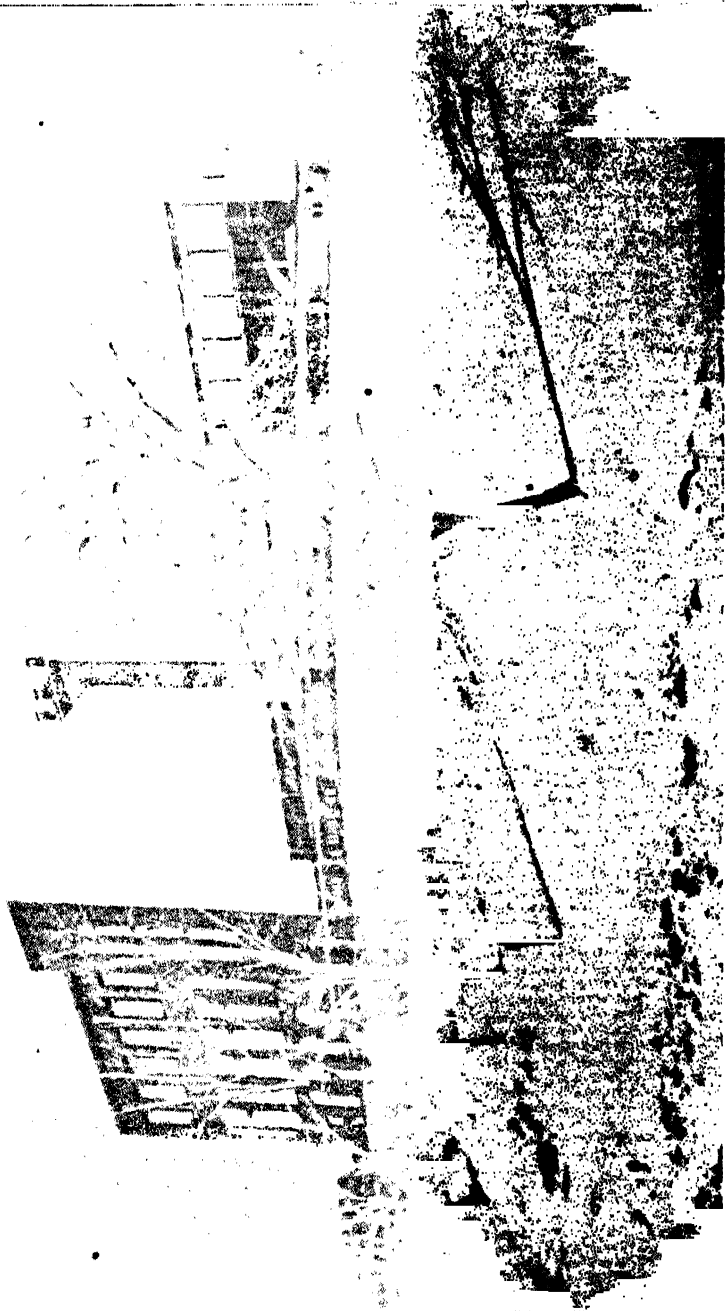


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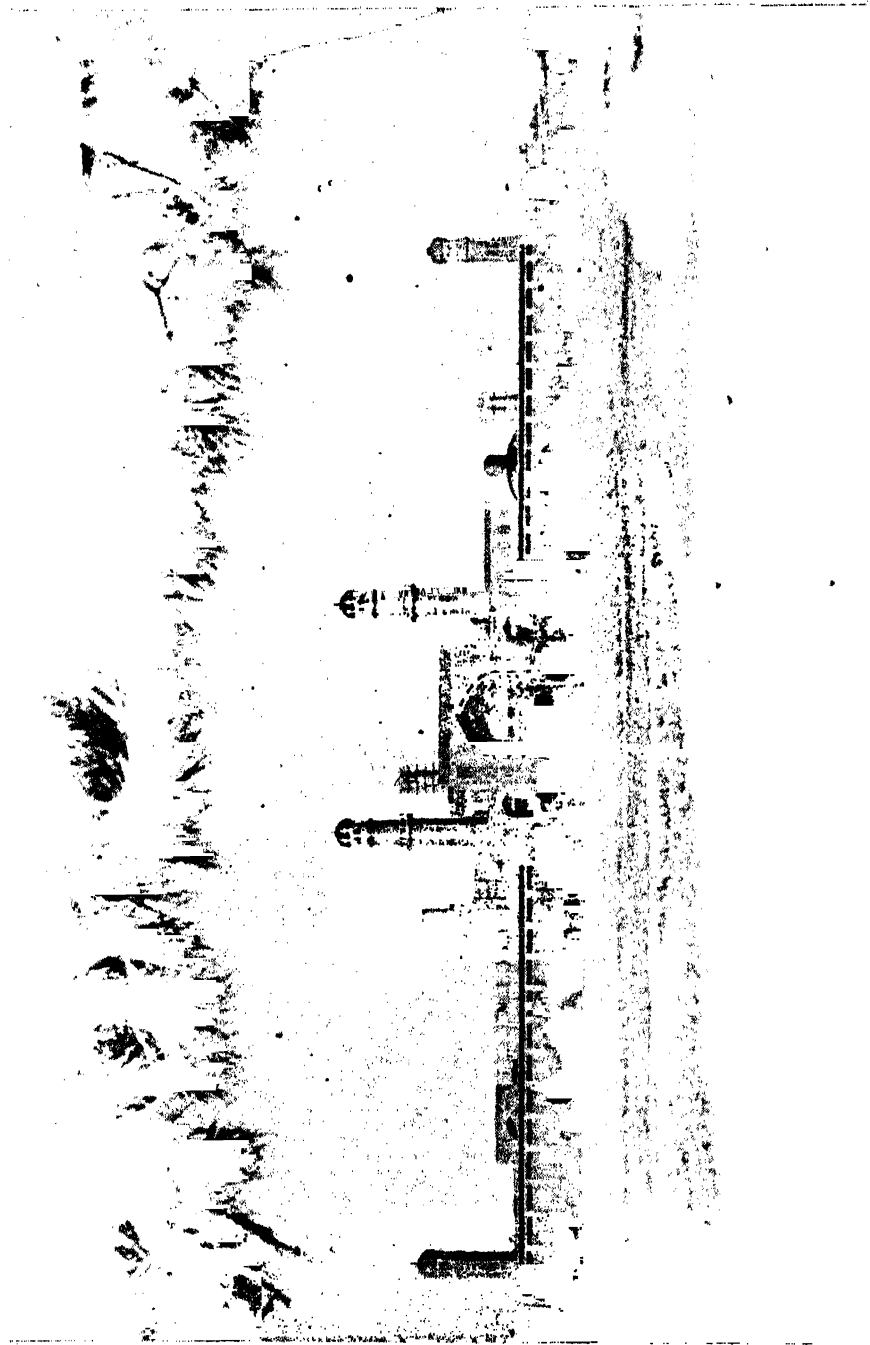
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A part of Shikari pass linking Kabul with Mazar Province



A view of the Grand Mosque at Herat. 15th Century.



**Sardar Mohamed Daud Afghan Prime Minister. A keen and sincere supporter of National Aspirations**



**Art of Pre-Islamic Afghanistan. Kabul Museum.**



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|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
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| Thornburn (S.S.)      | Bannu or Our Afghan Frontier.                                              |                         |
|                       | London, 1876                                                               |                         |
| Thornton (Mr. & Mrs.) | Leaves from an Afghan Scrap Book.                                          |                         |
|                       | London, 1910                                                               |                         |
| Thornton              | A Gazetteer of the Countries Adjacent to India on the North-West           | London, 1844            |
| Tichy (Herbert)       | Travels through Afghanistan, India and Tibet.                              | London, 1938            |
| Tipper (G.H.)         | The Geology and Mineral Resources of Eastern Persia.                       | Survey of India, 1921   |
| Todd.                 | Report of a Journey from Herat to Simla.                                   |                         |
|                       | Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal.                                         | 1844                    |
| Trench                | Russo-Indian Question                                                      | 1869                    |
| Trinkler (Emil)       | Afghanistan                                                                | Gotha, 1928             |
|                       | Von Herat nach Kabul.                                                      | Munchen, 1924           |
|                       | Afghanistan, Land und Leute                                                | Munchen.                |
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| Trotter (Capt.)       | History of India under Queen Victoria.                                     |                         |
|                       |                                                                            | 1886                    |
| Trump                 | Grammar of the Pashto Language of the Afghans.                             | London, 1873            |
| Tytler (Sir Fraser)   | Afghanistan                                                                | London, 1950            |
| Vambrey (A.)          | Coming Struggle for India.                                                 | 2 Vols. 1885            |
| Vavilov and Bukinich  | Agricultural Afghanistan (in Russian) with English Summary.                | Leningrad, 1929         |
| Verchere (A.M.)       | On the Geology of Kashmir, the Western Himalayas and the Afghan Mountains. |                         |
|                       | Asiatic Society of Bengal                                                  | 1867                    |

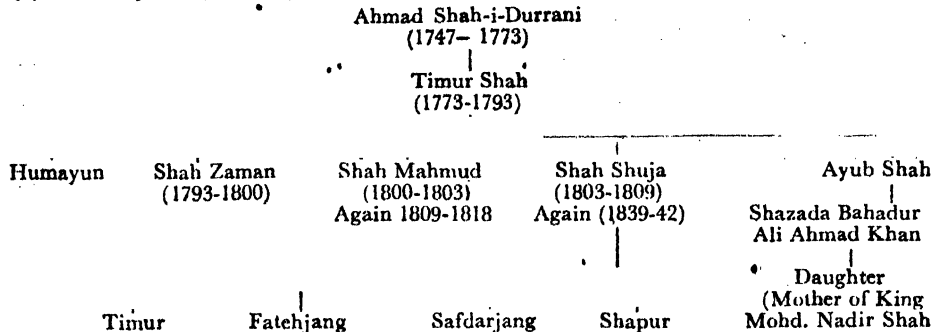
- Vigne (G.T.)      A Personal Narrative of a Visit to Ghazni, Kabul and Afghanistan      London, 1843
- Vialov (O.S.)      • Notes on the Miocene of Afghanistan (in Russian)      Moscow, 1936
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- Voigt (Martin)      Kafiristan      Breslau, 1933
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- Waterhouse (J.)      Notes on the Survey Operations. in Afghanistan.      Calcutta, 1879
- War with Afghanistan (1919)      Prepared in the Intelligence Branch of the Indian Army Headquarters.      London, 1926
- Warburton      Eighteen Years in the Khyber Pass (1879—1897, 1900)
- Weir (T.S.)      Journey with and After the Afghan Mission.      Bombay, 1890
- Wheeler (S.)      The Amir Abdur Rahman Khan.      1895
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Washington, 1933
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- Wilson (J. Christy)      *An Introduction to Colloquial Kabul Persian.*      California, 1955
- Wilson      *Aryana Antiqua.*      1841
- Wood (Lt. John)      *Personal Narrative of a Journey to the Source of the River Oxus.*      London, 1874
- Walker (P.F.)      *Afghanistan*      London, 1881
- Wylly (Col.)      *From the Black Mountain to Waziristan.*  
1912
- Wyllie      *Essay on the External Policy of India.*      1875
- Yate (Maj.)      *Northern Afghanistan*      London, 1888
- Yate (Lt. Col. C.C.)      *Travels with the Afghan Boundary Commission.*      London, 1887
- Yate (Lt. Col. C.C.)      *Khurasan and Seistan.*  
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- Younghusband (Col. George)      *The Story of the Guides*
- Yudin (G.L.)      *On the Geological Structure of the Central Pamir.*      Leningrad, 1932
- Youngs (F.U.)      *Report on Five Years of Agricultural Work in Afghan Qandahar*      Mimeographed.

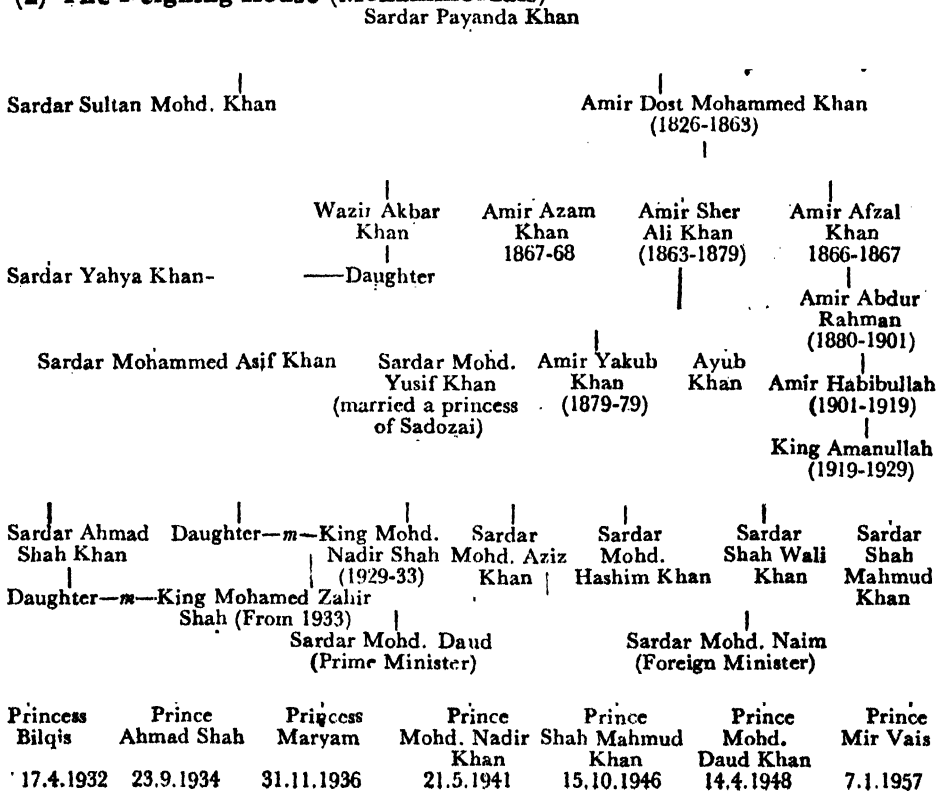
## APPENDIX I

### Geological Tables

#### (1) The Dynasty of the Durrani (The Sadozai Family)



#### (2) The Reigning House (Mohammedzais)



## APPENDIX II

**Weights & Measures**

Weights and measures are not uniform throughout the country. The Government is, therefore, trying to introduce the metric system

**Measures of length :**

|                                                             |                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Gaz-i-Shah (Kabul yard).....                             | 1.065 meters      |
| 2. Girah-i-Gaz-i-Shah                                       | ... .066 „        |
| 3. Gaz-i-Memar (Mason's yard)                               | ... .838 „        |
| 4. Gaz-i-Jareeb (this is mostly used for<br>measuring land) | ... .736 „        |
| 5. Side of a Jarceb                                         | ...44.183 „       |
| 6. Side of a Biswah                                         | ... 9.879 „       |
| 7. Side of a Biswasah                                       | ... 2.209 „       |
| 8. 1 Koroh (used for distances of roads)                    | 4,000 Jareeb yds. |

**Weight Measures :**

|               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. One Makhud | ... .19 grams                       |
| One Misqal    | ... 4.4 „                           |
| One Khurd     | ... 110.4 „                         |
| One Pao       | ... 441.6 „                         |
|               | (approximately an<br>English pound) |
| One Charak    | ... 1766.4 grams                    |
| One Seer      | ... 7066.0 „                        |
| One Kharwar   | 565280.0 „                          |

## APPENDIX III

### Afghan Calendar

The Calendar of the country is based upon the Hijra Era. All Government letters and documents usually bear two dates—solar and lunar. For financial and revenue purposes the solar year, which begins from the 21st of March, is followed.

The Afghan solar months are :—

|     |                         | Number of days | First day falls on |
|-----|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1.  | Hama (Aries) ...        | 31             | 21st of March      |
| 2.  | Thaur (Taurus) ...      | 31             | 21st of April      |
| 3.  | Jawza (Gemini) ...      | 32             | 22nd of May        |
| 4.  | Saratan (Cancer) ...    | 31             | 23rd of June       |
| 5.  | Asad (Leo) ...          | 31             | 24th of July       |
| 6.  | Sunbula (Virgo) ...     | 31             | 24th of August     |
| 7.  | Mizan (Libra) ...       | 30             | 24th of September  |
| 8.  | Aqrab (Scorpio) ...     | 30             | 24th of October    |
| 9.  | Qaus (Sagittarius) ...  | 29             | 24th of November   |
| 10. | Jaddi (Capricornus) ... | 29             | 23rd of December   |
| 11. | Dalv (Aquarius) ...     | 30             | 21st of January    |
| 12. | Hoot (Pisces) ...       | 30             | 20th of February   |

### Afghanistan Government Holidays

First of Hamal (March 21st) ... Nihalshani (plantation).  
 Sixth of Jawza (May 26th) ... Independence day. (King  
 Mohd. Nadir Shah took Thal on that day)  
 Asad, one week for Independence Celebrations. One day  
 for Pashtunistan.

First of Ramazan month.

Three days on account of Id-ul-Fitr.

18th of Sunbula ... opening of the Afghan National  
 Assembly

23rd of Mizan (October 16th). Nijat-i-Watan (deliverance  
celebrations)

Four days on account of Iduz-Zuha

10th of Muharram (Ashura day)

One day on account of the Prophet's birthday (Id-i-Mild-i-  
Nabi)

Schools and Colleges and all Government Departments  
remain closed on Fridays.

**Note** :—22nd of Mizan, that is the 15th of October, is the King's  
birthday and 16th of Agrab (November 8th) is the King's  
accession to the throne, but these are not observed as  
holidays on which Government offices are closed.

## APPENDIX IV

**Banking & Currency**

The remodelling of the currency in 1927 introduced the Afghani as the unit of the monetary system, as distinct from the old coin, Kabuli. An Afghani is a silver piece, weighing 10 Grams, 90 being fine. It is divided into 100 puls. The 50 puls pieces, called Kirans, are now mostly of nickel. Smaller pieces of 25 puls, 10 puls, and 5 puls are also used. Paper currency was introduced in 1936, and since then has proved to be extremely popular.

Before the reign of King Mohammed Nadir Shah Afghanistan had no bank of its own, and the currency and other banking business were carried on by private bankers and moneylenders, mostly foreigners. There were no firms or trading concerns in the country : each trader used to take his goods on his own responsibility to foreign markets and dispose of them at the price ruling on the day or at the price offered. Being always short of funds and in a hurry to go back, he could not wait for better opportunities to sell his merchandise. Usually the foreign traders or business companies which were fully aware of his shortcomings and financial difficulties would join hands against him, making him accept the price offered, however low it might be.

Representatives of foreign firms would enter Afghanistan and offer money in advance to local producers on condition that they would sell their goods to them alone at the stipulated prices, which were usually far below the market rates. The Government could not interfere, for they themselves had bound their hands by formal agreements and legal contracts. Moreover the Government had no control over foreign exchange and



imports and exports of the country. Generally imports exceeded exports, thereby greatly affecting the exchange value of the Afghan currency. It was to meet this great demand that King Mohammed Nadir Shah established (in 1930) a Joint-Stock Company—Shirkat-i-Ashaml—the forerunner of the present Afghan National Bank. The exchange rate of the currency was fixed, private bankings was disallowed; local traders were encouraged to do all foreign business through the bank and to keep the value of their exports and imports at par. In cases of financial difficulties the bank was to advance money at low interest, thus enabling them to withstand a dull market.

Funds were required for launching various development schemes to make the country self-sufficient in certain commodities for which it has adequate supply of raw materials or what could be acquired by further development. So the need for establishing new banks and business concerns arose with the development of natural resources and ever increasing demand of the country for consumers' goods.

At present Afghanistan has five banks—(1) Da Afghanistan Bank, (2) Bank-i-Millie (Afghan National Bank), (3) Pashtanay Tijarati Bank (Afghan Commercial Bank), (4) Construction Bank, and (5) Agriculture and Handicrafts Bank. There are no branches of any foreign bank in the country.

Da Afghanistan Bank founded in 1938 is a Government concern which performs the function of a Central Bank. It is in reality the old Government treasury put on modern lines and is mainly concerned with issuing currency notes, transacting financial affairs of the State and controlling the exchange rate of the currency.

The most important commercial bank in the country is the Bank-i-Millie, located in Kabul and founded in 1935. It has now

branches or agencies in London, New York, Munich, Bombay, Karachi, Peshawar and Chaman. Next comes the Afghan Commercial Bank (Pashtany Tejaraty Bank), established in 1955 on the basis of a Joint Stock Company for the purpose of developing the commerce of the country. It has at present a branch at Amritsar (India). The initial capital of the Bank is 1,20,000,000 Afghanis divided into 120,000 shares of 1,000 Afghanis each.

The purpose of the new bank is to provide short and long term credits to businessmen and merchants ; to issue bonds and securities, and to open saving and demand deposits. \*

The Bank of Construction and Mortgages was established in 1948. Among the designated purposes of the bank on the promotion of house-building and of building materials, the financing of hotels and the financing of low-cost Community housing projects. This bank specially serves government employees in need of long-term credits for house building.

## APPENDIX V

## Periodicals

| <i>Name</i>         | <i>Place of Issue</i>      | <i>Particulars</i>                                                                                              |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Islah               | Kabul                      | Daily, Pashto-Persian.                                                                                          |
| Anis                | Kabul                      | „ „                                                                                                             |
| Hewad               | Kabul                      | „ Pashto                                                                                                        |
| Zerai               | Kabul                      | Weekly, Pashto                                                                                                  |
| Zirma               | Kabul                      | Weekly, Pashto-Persian                                                                                          |
| Iqtisad             | Kabul                      | Weekly, Persian English.<br>Deals with economic problems.                                                       |
| Pamir               | Kabul                      | Biweekly, Pashto-Persian.                                                                                       |
| Habibiana           | Kabul (Habibia<br>College) | Weekly, English.                                                                                                |
| Zhwandoon           | Kabul                      | Weekly, Pashto-Persian<br>Literary Magazine.                                                                    |
| Bakhtar Bulletin.   | Kabul                      | Daily, English.                                                                                                 |
| Kabul.              | Kabul                      | Fortnightly, Pashto Literary<br>Magazine.                                                                       |
| Aryana              | Kabul                      | Monthly, Persian, deals with<br>historical topics.                                                              |
| Afghanistan         | Kabul                      | Quarterly, English-French,<br>Organ of Afghan Society of<br>Historical Research.                                |
| Irfan               | Kabul                      | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Sponsored by the Ministry of<br>Education.                                          |
| Bikhwan wa<br>Bidan | Kabul                      | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Providing reading material for<br>those who follow the adult<br>educational courses |

| <i>Name</i>             | <i>Place of Issue</i> | <i>Particulars</i>                                                            |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adab.                   | Kabul                 | Quarterly, Persian-Pashto.<br>Faculty of Letters.                             |
| Huqooq                  | Kabul                 | Monthly, Persian. Law College.                                                |
| Urdu                    | Kabul                 | Monthly, Persian-Pashto.<br>Ministry of Defence.                              |
| Payam-i-Haq             | Kabul                 | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.                                                      |
| Barg-i-Sabz             | Kabul                 | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Literary Magazine.                                |
| Pashtun Zhagh           | Kabul                 | Fortnightly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Kabul Radio.                                  |
| Ta'lim wa Tarbia        | Kabul                 | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Educational Institute.                            |
| Merman                  | Kabul                 | Quarterly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Organ of Women's welfare<br>Society.            |
| Roghtiya                | Kabul                 | Monthly, Pashto-Persian.<br>Health Magazine.                                  |
| Shura                   | Kabul                 | Quarterly Pashto-Persian.<br>Publication of the National<br>Assembly.         |
| Sera Miyasht            | Kabul                 | Quarterly, Pashto-Persian,<br>English-French. Afghan Red<br>Crescent Society. |
| Kerhanai                | Kabul                 | Quarterly, Persian-Pashto,<br>Agricultural Magazine.                          |
| Bareed                  | Kabul                 | Quarterly, Persian.                                                           |
| Tulu-i-Afghan           | Kandahar              | Daily, Pashto.                                                                |
| Ithiad-i-Mash-<br>raqi. | Jalalabad             | Daily, Pashto.                                                                |

## APPENDIX VI

**A Brief Introduction to Colloquial Kabul Farsi\***

The following is a brief introduction to Farsi as it is spoken in the capital city of Kabul. *This differs from the literary language*, which though highly respected, is used only rarely in speaking. A studied attempt has been made to capture the living colloquial which is best understood and used in common conversation.

These few pages are simply to help you to speak and understand modern Kabul Farsi. Reading and writing the actual script can be learned through the primers used in the Afghan schools or with Dr. Frank Laubach's readers for illiterates published by the Royal Afghan Ministry of Education.

Since sounds differ in various languages, the best way to illustrate these accurately is by using a simple phonetic alphabet. For this reason, seven new symbols besides those which we have in the regular English alphabet have been used. With very little practice these become familiar.

The eight vowel sounds in Kabul Farsi will be written thus :

|                  |                  |                   |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| /i/ as in "peel" | /a/ as in "pal"  | /au/ as in "pole" |
| /i/ as in "pill" | /u/ as in "pool" | /au/ as in "Paul" |
| /e/ as in "pail" | /u/ as in "pull" |                   |

The twenty-three consonant sounds will be written thus:

|                  |                  |                    |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| /p/ as in "pill" | /f/ as in "fill" | /l/ as in "Lil"    |
| /b/ as in "bill" | /t/ as in "till" | /s/ as in "sill"   |
| /m/ as in "mill" | /d/ as in "dill" | /z/ as in "zeal"   |
| /w/ as in "will" | /n/ as in "nil"  | /ch/ as in "chill" |

\*Compiled by Dr. Rev. J. Christy Wilson, formerly Professor of English Habibia College, Kabul.

|                   |                      |                 |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| /j/ as in "jill"  | /z/ as in "pleasure" | /g/ (see below) |
| /r/ as in "rill"  | /k/ as in "kill"     | /x/ (see below) |
| /y/ as in "yell"  | /g/ as in "gill"     | /q/ (see below) |
| /s/ as in "shell" | /ng/ as in "fling"   |                 |

There are also four diphthongs as follows :

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| /ai/ (not in English) | /aui/ as in “poison” |
| /au/ as in “pound”    | /aui/ as in “pie”    |

The following are some hints in pronouncing some of the above sounds which are slightly or completely different from those in English. /t/ /d/ and /n/ are made by placing the tip of the tongue behind the upper teeth, not on the upper gum ridge as in English.

/l/ is made with the top part of the tongue closer to the roof of the mouth than it is in English.

**/r/** is pronounced by trilling the tip of the tongue.

/ŋg/ is made like the English in “sang”, but the final “g” is also pronounced.

/x/ is like the sound one makes in clearing the upper part of the throat.

**/g/ is made like /x/ but also has voice from the throat.**

/q/ is a backward /k/ made by pressing the back part of the tongue against the back part of the palate, and then releasing a small explosion of air.

The stressed parts of words and phrases will be underlined.

## REETING AND COMMON EXPRESSIONS :

**“Hello” salom olekum                      “Are you well?” xub asti?**

**“How are you?” ci tor asti? “How is your health” ci yol dauri?**

Responses to these greetings are :

**“Be alive” zinda bausi      “Be in peace” salaumat bausi**

## Expressions of farewell:

"God be your protector"      "Be in God's safety" **bau maunt**  
**xudau** aufiz      xudau

## General expressions:

"Don't get tired" **maunda**      "Go ahead" (polite form) **bufer-**  
**nabaushi**      mauyen

"If God wills" **inshaulau**      "It doesn't matter" **parwau nes**

"Please" **merabauni** kada (or) "Thank you" **tashakur**  
**lutfan**

"Sir" **sauib**      "Mister" (at end of names) **xaun**

"Yes" **balé**      "No" **ne**

## The Present and Future Tense of the Verb:

"I do, I shall do" **mekonum**      "We do, we shall do" **mekonem**

"You do, you will do"      "You do, you will do" **mekonèn**  
**mekoni**

"He, she, it does, will do"      "They do, they will do" **mekonan**  
**mekona**

## The verb "to be" with personal pronouns is as follows:

"I am" **ma astum**      "We are" **mau astem**

"You are" **tu asti**      "You are" **sumau asten**

"He, she, it is" **u as**      "They are" **uau astan**

The following are some useful question and answer patterns:

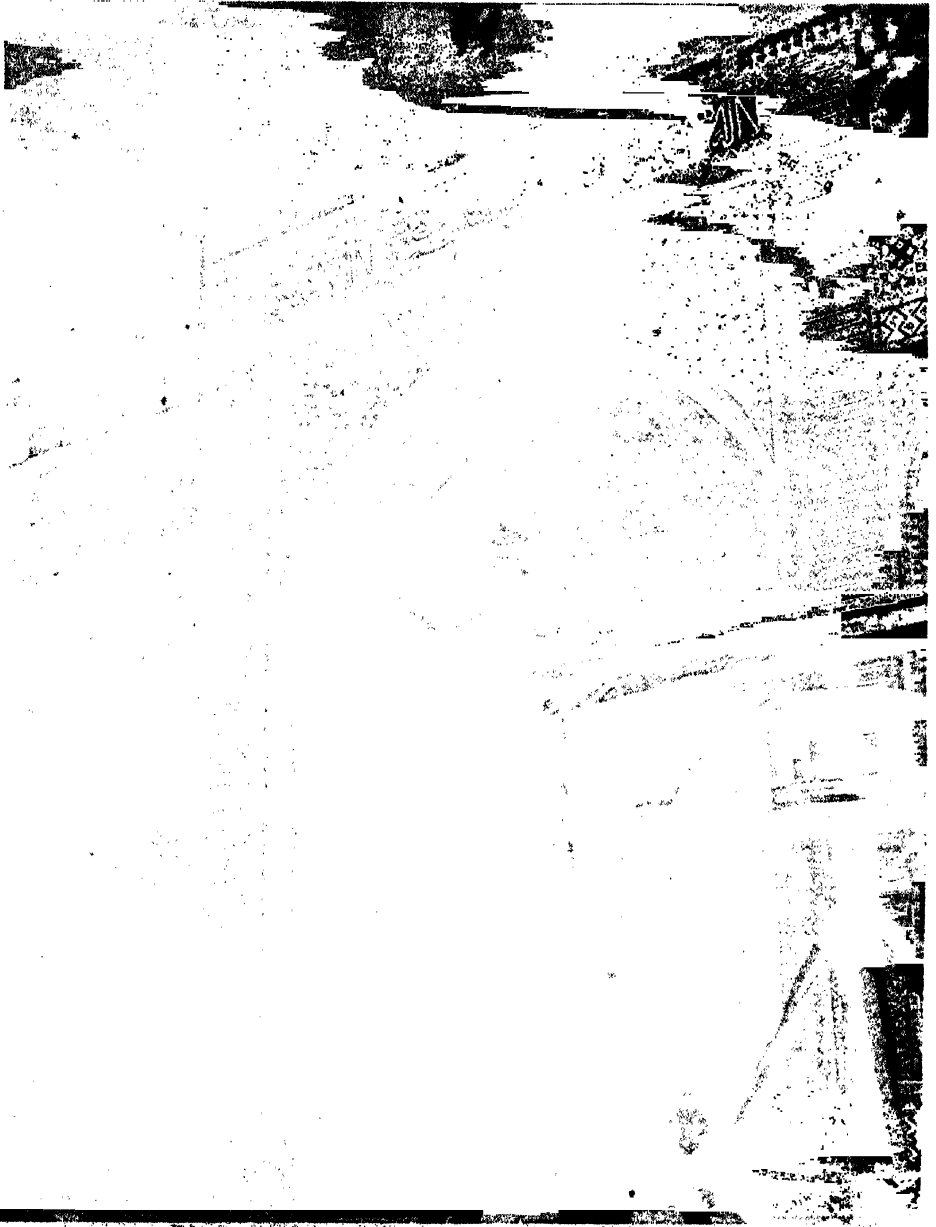
"What is this?" **i cis?**      "This is bread." **i naun as.**

"What do you want?" **ci**      "I want water." **au mexaayum.**  
**mexaui?**

"Where is the hotel?" **otal**      "The hotel is there." **otal ujaus.**  
**kojaus?**

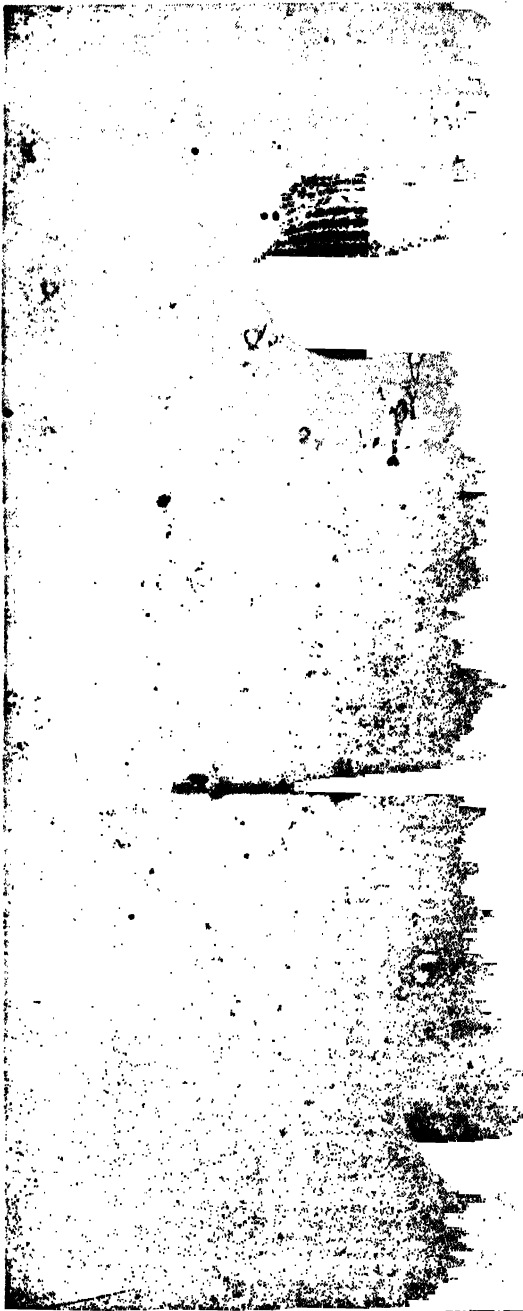
## The following are the numbers:

|                |                |                 |                |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| (1) <b>yak</b> | (3) <b>se</b>  | (5) <b>panj</b> | (7) <b>aft</b> |
| (2) <b>du</b>  | (4) <b>cor</b> | (6) <b>sas</b>  | (8) <b>ast</b> |



Mazar-i-Sharif Specimen of Afghan architecture of the 15th Century.





Mussala and Gumbad-i-Sabz (the Green Dome) at Herat.

|              |              |                 |                     |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| (9) no       | (15) ponzda  | (21) bist-u-yak | (80) ashtaud        |
| (10) da      | (16) shonzda | (30) si         | (90) nawad          |
| (11) yauzda  | (17) abda    | (40) chil       | (100) yak-sad       |
| (12) duauzda | (18) azhda   | (50) pinjau     | (101) yak-sad-u-yak |
| (13) sezda   | (19) nozda   | (60) shast      | (1,000) yag-azor    |
| (14) chorda  | (20) bist    | (70) aftaud     | (100,000) yak-lak   |

### Telling Time :

“What time is it?” **chan** bajas? “It’s 3.” **se** bajas. “It’s 9 : 10.”  
no u **das**.

### The days of the week are:

“Sunday” **yakshambe**, “Monday” **dushambe**, “Tuesday”  
**seshambe**, “Wednesday” **chorshambe**, “Thursday” **panshambe**,  
“Friday” **juma**, “Saturday” **shambe**.

### The seasons are:

“spring” **awali baur**, “summer” **baur**, “fall” **tirmau**, “winter”  
**zimistaun**.

### The directions are expressed in this way :

“north” **shamaul**, “south” **junub**, “east” **mashriq**, “west”  
**magrib**. “to the right” **tarafi raus**, “straight ahead” **ru ba ru**,  
“to the left” **tarafi chap**.

### The following are imperative commands :

“Bring tea.” **caui biaur**. “Buy sugar” **bura bixar**. “Take the  
tea.” **cauia bubar**. “Bring the coffee.” **kofira biaur**. “Fill the  
cup”. **piaulara pur ko**. “Wait.” **sabir ko**. “Go to the bazaar.”  
**bauzaur buro**. “Don’t go to the bazaar.” **bauzaur naro**. “Don’t  
empty the cup.” **piaulara xauli nako**. “Come here.” **ijabiau**.

### The simple past tense is as follows :

“I did” **kadum**, “You did” **kadi**, “He, she, it did” **kad**, “We  
did” **kadem**, “You did” **kaden**, “They did” **kadan**. “I did not  
do.” **nakadum**.

“He bought a lot of karakul.” *bisya<sup>ur</sup> qara<sup>qul</sup> xarid*.

The verb in Kabul Farsi almost always comes at the end of the sentence.

The possessive in Kabul Farsi is formed by adding an [i] sound in the place where the English “of” occurs. For example: [band] means “dam” and [amir] means “king”, therefore [bandi amir] means “the dam of the king”. Most adjectives also occur in this form, and thus unlike English they come after the noun they modify. For example: [shaur] is “city” and [nau] is “new”, therefore [shori nau] is “the new city”.

## An English To Kabul Faris Word List

|                               |                                |                            |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| "able, to be" taunis-<br>tan  | "boiled" water<br>awijoshdauda | "chicken" murg             |
| "airport" maidauni<br>taiaura | "bolt" qulfak                  | "church" kalisau           |
| "almond" bodaum               | "bottle" botal                 | "city" shaur               |
| "answer, to" juaub<br>daudan  | "brass" birinj                 | "clothescloset"<br>anwauri |
| "any appliance"<br>maushin    | "bread" naun                   | "coal" sangizogaul         |
| "apple" sew, seb              | "breakfast" noshtau            | "coat hanger" kot-<br>band |
| "apricot" Zardaulu            | "bridge" pul                   | "coffee" kaufi             |
| "ask" pursoa kadan            | "bring, to"<br>auwurdan        | "cold" yax                 |
| "ask for" xaustan             | "broom" jaru                   | "color" rang               |
| "asked the value<br>bai kadan | "brown naswaurz                | "comb" shauna              |
| "bank" baung                  | "bulb" gurup                   | "come, to" aumadan         |
| "bath" amaum                  | "bus" sarwez                   | "cook, to" puxta<br>kadan  |
| "bathroom" tashnaub           | "butter" maska                 | "cook" aushpaz             |
| "bazaar" bauzaur              | "button" tukma                 | "cookie" kulcha            |
| "beans" lobiau                | "cabbage" karam                | "couch" kauch              |
| "be, to" budan                | "cake" kek                     | "cream" gaimaug            |
| "become, to" shudan           | "candle" sham                  | "cup" piaula               |
| "bed" bistara                 | "candy" shirni                 | "cupboard" anwauri         |
| "beef" goshtigau              | "car" motar                    | "cucumber"<br>baudrang     |
| "beet" lablabu                | "carpet" qaulin                | "curtain" parda            |
| "blanket" kampal              | "carrot" zardak                | "custom" audat             |
| "black" siau                  | "cauliflower"<br>gulikaram     | "customs" gumruk           |
| "blue" auboz                  | "chair" chauki                 | "dam" band                 |
| "boil, to" josh dodan         | "charcoal" zogal               | "date" xurmo               |
|                               | "cheese" paner                 | "day" roz                  |
|                               | "cherry" gelaus                |                            |

|                     |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| "dessert" shirni    | "fly" magas         | howmuch" chand      |
| "ditch" joi         | "food" naun         | "hundred" sad       |
| "do, to" kadan      | "foot" paui         | "hundred thou-      |
| "dog" sag           | "fork" panja        | sand" lak           |
| "door" darwauza     | "four" chaur        | "I" ma              |
| "drugstore" dawau-  | "fourteen" chorda   | "ice" yax           |
| xauna               | "forty" chil        | "icecream" shiryax  |
| "eat, to" xordan    | "fruit" mewa        | "if" aga            |
| "east" mashriq      | "full" ser          | "it" u              |
| "egg" toxum         | "garage" garauch    | "iron," auin        |
| "eggplant" baunjau- | "garden" baug       | "iron, to"          |
| nisiau              | "give, to" daudan   | utu kadan           |
| "eight" asht        | "glass" gelaus      | "jam" murabo        |
| "eighteen" ashda    | "glasses" auinak    | "karaku" qaraqul    |
| "eighty" ashtaud    | "go, to" raftan     | "key" kili          |
| "electricity" barq  | "gold" tilau        | "kerosene" telixauk |
| "eleven" yauzda     | "grape" angur       | "knife" kaurd       |
| "embassy" sifaurat  | "green" sabz        | "lamp" chiraug      |
| "enough" bas        | "ground meat"       | "lapis luzuli"      |
| "autumn" tirmau     | kofta               | laujaward           |
| "faucet" shirdon    | "hall" daulez       | "large" kalon       |
| "fifteen" ponzda    | "have, to" daushtan | "later on" pason    |
| "fifty" pinjo       | "head" sar          | laundryman" dobi    |
| "fig" anjir         | "hear, to" shunidan | "left" chap         |
| "finished, to be"   | "he" u              | "lemon" limu        |
| xalau shudan        | "hello" salaum      | "letter" maktub     |
| "fish" mauil        | "horse" asp         | "lettuce" kauu      |
| "five" panj         | "hotel" otal        | "light, to" dar     |
| "floor" farsh       | "hot water" awidaug | daudan              |
| "flour" aurd        | "hour" saut         | "lip" lab           |
| "flower" gul        | "house" xauna       | "little" kam        |

|                     |                    |                      |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| "lock" qulf         | "no" ne            | "raison" kishmish    |
| "lock, to" qulf     | "noon" chosht      | "restaurant"         |
| kadan               | "north" shamaul    | ristoraun            |
| "lunch" naunichosht | "now" auli         | "read, to" xaundan   |
| "make, to" sauxtan  | "office" daftar    | "red" surx           |
| "matches" gogird    | "oil" tel          | "rice" birinj        |
| "mattres" toshak    | "one" yak          | "rice, plain cooked" |
| "meat" gosht        | "onion" piauz      | chatau               |
| "milk" shir         | "open, to" wauz    | "rice, spiced" palau |
| "ministry" wizaurat | kadan              | "right" raus         |
| "minute" daqa       | "orange" maula     | "river" daryau       |
| "mirror" auina      | "pea" mushung      | "road" rau           |
| "money" paisa       | "peach" saftaulu   | "roast" kabaub       |
| "morning" sob       | "pear" nauk        | "rock sugar" qand    |
| "mosque" maujit     | "pepper" murch     | "room xauna          |
| "mosquito" pasha    | "pickles" turshi   | "rug" gilam          |
| "mountain" ko       | "pitcure" aks      | "safety pin" ping    |
| "mouse" mush        | "pillow" bolisht   | "salad" salaute      |
| "movie" sinumau     | "pin" sinjoq       | "salt" namak         |
| "mulberry" tut      | "pine nut" jalgoza | "saucer" nolbaki     |
| "museum" muziam     | "pistachio" pista  | "say, to" guftan     |
| "muskmelon"         | "plate" bishqaub   | "school" maktab      |
| xarbuza             | "plum" aulu        | "scissors" qaichi    |
| "mutton"            | "pomegranate"      | "screen" jauli       |
| gostigosfan         | anaur              | "see, to" didan      |
| "napkin" dismaul    | "post office"      | "send, to" roi kadan |
| "needle" sozan      | postaxauna         | "servant" nokar      |
| "night" shau        | "potato" kachaulu  | "seven" aft          |
| "nine" no           | "pound" pau        | "seventeen" abda     |
| "nineteen" nozda    | "pudding" pudin    | "seventy" aftaud     |
| "ninety" nawad      | "quilt" liauf      | "silver" nuqra       |

|                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| "sit, to" shishtan   | "telegram" teligirom | faumidan             |
| "six" shash          | "telephone" telefoni | "very" bisyaur       |
| "sixteen" shonzda    | "ten" da             | "village" de         |
| "sixty" shast        | "they" uau           | "wall" dewaul        |
| "she" u              | "thirteen" sezda     | "walnut" chaurmagz   |
| "sheet" ruijau       | "thirty" si          | "warm, to" garm      |
| "shop" dokaun        | "thousand" azor      | kadan                |
| "sky" ausmaun        | "thread" tor         | "wash, to" shushtan  |
| "sleep, to" xau      | "three" se           | "wash basin" tasht   |
| kadan                | "today" imroz        | "water" au           |
| "snake" maur         | "tomato"             | "watermelon"         |
| "soap" saubun        | baunjaunirumi        | tarbuz               |
| "south" junub        | "tomorrow" sabau     | "we" mo              |
| "spinach" paulak     | "tooth" dandaun      | "west" magrib        |
| "spoon" qaushuq      | "toothbrush"         | "wheat" gandum       |
| "spring" awali baur  | bursidandaun         | "when" kai           |
| "stairs" zina        | "tooth paste"        | "white" safed        |
| "stone" sang         | kirimidandaun        | "window" kilkin      |
| "store" dokon        | "take, to" giriftan  | "winter" zimistaun   |
| "street" sarak       | "talk, to" gap zadan | "wire" sim           |
| "string"             | "trap" talak         | "wood" chob          |
| respaunitauri        | "tray" patnus        | "work" kaur          |
| "study, to" xaundan  | "tree" daraxt        | "work, to" kaur      |
| "sugar" bura         | "trip" safar         | kaudan               |
| "summer" baur        | "truck" lauri        | "write, to" nuista   |
| "supper" naunisau    | "twelve" duaazda     | kadan                |
| "table" mez          | "twenty" bist        | "yellow" zard        |
| "tangerine" sangtara | "two" du             | "yes" bale           |
| "tea" choi           | "umbrella" chatr     | "yesterday" diroz    |
| "teapot" chauinak    | "understand, to"     | "you" tu (or) shumau |

## APPENDIX VII

**The five-year plan for Development of National Economy**

In August 1956, on the occasion of the Independence Celebrations, His Majesty the King of Afghanistan and Sardar Mohammad Daud, the Prime Minister, announced that as the result of long and careful studies and research carried out by specialists, a five-year plan with a view to secure a rapid growth of national economy was drawn up.

This plan is of vital importance in the nation's history. It seeks to translate into practical action the aspirations and ideals of the 12 million people in the country and gives to each of them the opportunity of service in the common cause of eliminating poverty and ignorance and raising the standards of living. It is a plan of peaceful economic construction and cultural development and has been formulated with reference to the following principal objectives :—

- (a) a sizeable increase in national income so as to raise the level of living in the country ;
- (b) tapping the natural resources of the country and making it self-sufficient in commodities for which it is best suited ;
- (c) a large expansion of employment opportunity ; and
- (d) attaining the largest measure of social justice and more even distribution of income and wealth.

In this plan high priority has been given to expansion of agriculture and irrigation on which nearly 85% of the population depends. Industrial development along modern lines, as everybody knows, requires a great deal of capital but it absorbs comparatively little manpower. The Plan therefore attaches



greater importance to agriculture for it will provide employment for a greater number of people. At the same time it envisages a considerable increase in the capacity of electric power by construction of dams and control of flood water.

The responsibility of the Government in the matter of promoting, assisting and regulating the development of industry in the national interest cannot be emphasized too strongly. A country like Afghanistan which starts late on industrialization has to encompass within a relative brief period processes of development which took several generations in countries which had an early start. To this end resources have to be mobilized and deployed effectively and purposefully. A plan not only draws on existing resources, it develops and enlarges on them in the process. Resources are not a fixed or static quantity; they lie unknown or partially known unless conscious and organized efforts are made to locate them and develop them. In this connection intensive and systematic surveys and explorations, especially in the field of mineral resources, are of vital importance. Every effort has to be made to train up a corp of scientists and technicians for the purpose.

Sardar Mohammad Daud, the Prime Minister, referring to the five year plan in the National Assembly said. "The purpose of this Plan is to pursue a clear economic policy with a view to utilize to the best advantage available natural resources, capital and manpower. Every effort will be made to increase production, train technical personnel, practice strict economy and eliminate waste of every kind in the use of manpower, material resources and funds. The implementation of this Plan will enable us in achieving security of social justice, raising the living standard of all the classes and finally guaranteeing the general welfare of the people."

The Prime Minister further said, "Afghanistan's social and geographical conditions demand the economic developments to be sought more through the expansion of agricultural products and its relevant elements. The main reasons to support this suggestion are :—

- (a) Afghanistan though a mountainous country possesses extensive fertile pieces of land, the irrigation of which is possible by utilizing river waters and control of seasonal floods.
- (b) The majority of the population are farmers and have great interest and experience in agriculture.
- (c) Industrialization needs large capital and a high standard of technology, which at present are not available. Moreover competition in this field is very keen in foreign markets.
- (d) Manpower in our country, from the economic point of view, is a natural source of income. At the same time it is cheap and abundant. Utilization of this natural wealth is important from every point. Industries which need more outlay can employ a limited number of people, while in agriculture more people can be employed at a comparatively low cost.

These causes as well as several social, technological, economic and financial needs of the country demand that at present it is advisable to utilize fully our natural resources and manpower proportionate to their intelligence and aptitude for the economic development of the country. It is for this reason that agriculture and cattle breeding have been given first place and high priority in this economic plan. We intend to irrigate our virgin and arable lands and to increase water supply for

the lands already under cultivation and to control seasonal floods for irrigation as well as generating electricity. At present the construction of the following dams and canals have been taken into consideration :—

|                         |          | Estimated cost.   |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Jalalabad Canal         | 162      | million Afghanis. |
| Palto Dam, Katawaz      | 60·70    | „ „               |
| Sardah Dam, Kandahar    | 50·64    | „ „               |
| Kharwar Dam, Lohgar     | 24·357   | „ „               |
| Canal and Dam of Kunduz | 163·744  | „ „               |
| Canal and Dam of Kokcha | 506·250  | „ „               |
| Dam of Machalghou       | 40·500   | „ „               |
| Helmand Valley Project  | 1064·880 | „ „               |

A sum of 38,653 million Afghanis and 10.475 million dollars is earmarked for the improvement of the quality of seeds and plants. Another 9,623 million Afghanis and 0.671 million dollars will be spent to improve the live stock, especially the Karakul sheep and Marinos. To combat animal and plant diseases the Government intends to spend a further sum of 51,617 million Afghanis and 0·388 million dollars

The outlay for these multifarious purposes (irrigation, supply of better seeds and fertilizers, improvement of animal husbandry, etc.) works out at 46·06 per cent of the budget. Next to agriculture great importance is attached to communication. It is certain that any social, cultural, industrial or economic development in Afghanistan is dependent on an adequate transportation system. In the development of such an adequate system, a programme of road improvement and maintenance is of prime importance. The present road system, virtually a circle round the country, comprises about 4,000

miles. Offshoots from the primary system lead to Faizabad, Chaman, Iran and Russia. Most of the roads are of rock base.

Streams in Afghanistan present a serious problem in the maintenance of roads, in that during flood season such streams become virtual torrents with such force as to move great boulders which wreck or remove most bridge structures.

At the present time the roads in Afghanistan are not in very good condition. The necessity for better roads and the maintenance of these arteries can easily be realized from the amount that has been earmarked for this purpose in the five year plan. The cost of this project is estimated at 1,136,412 million Afghanis (including 38·813 million dollars). Roads between Kabul and Torkham, Kabul and Kandahar, Kandahar and Spin Boldak and some roads leading to the north are to be made broader and they are to be properly repaired. One thousand kilometers of these roads are to be asphalted.

A sum of 267·590 million Afghanis (including 10,500 million dollars) will be spent to construct airports on modern lines at Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Kataghan.

**Public Services :—**All sorts of developments in a country's social, cultural and economic fields are connected with the educational standard of the people. In the five-year plan, particular attention is paid to this problem. Five hundred rural schools, 90 elementary schools, 12 secondary, 2 faculties and 50 adult courses will be established during the course of these five years costing 318·800 million Afghanis (including 9·832 million dollars).

**Public Health :—**The Government recognizes that better health for the people is of paramount importance. In the plan a new 300 bed hospital is to be opened at Kabul in addition

to those already in existence. Hospitals for women will be established at Gardez, Khost, Badakhshan, Maimana, Ghazni, and Farrah. Dental hospitals will be opened at Gardez, Kataghan and Mashriqi. Laboratories and clinics will be established at Khost, 'Badakhshan,' Maimana, Ghazni and Farrah. Total cost is estimated at 102·970 million Afghanis (including 1·092 million dollars).

**Community Development and Municipal Projects :—** The Government intends to work for the village uplift in 500 villages during the first year of the plan. This is to be extended to 1,620 villages in the second year, to 1,740 villages in the third year, to 1,860 villages in the fourth year and to 2,220 villages in the fifth and final year. The project will cost the Government. 166 million Afghanis. The foreign exchange expense for this project estimated at 2·500 million dollars will be paid through foreign aid and other miscellaneous foreign currency expenses. The municipalities will also be helped to supply good drinking water, to asphalt public streets and to provide parks and recreation grounds.

**Mines :** Afghanistan is rich in some important minerals. The economic plan, within its means, provides the possibilities of utilizing these natural resources. Included in these projects are the drilling and search for petroleum (to be commenced at Saripul), physical and geological survey and exploitation in northern provinces, expansion of the exploitation of coal mines at Ishpushta, Karkar and other places in and around the Hindukush and Herat. The expenses in this line will amount to 242·439 million Afghanis (including 6 million dollars).

**Industries :—** Present factories and industries will be completed and encouraged and new ones for textile, cement,

electric power, oil extraction, fruit conservation, leathermaking, matches, glassware and cottage industries set up in various parts of the country. For the expense of these projects, besides the amount to be supplied by private firms, 1,875.872 million Afghanis is appropriated from the budget of the Plan. This amount includes 58.620 million dollars. The total increase in production of industries is estimated at 7,08.314 million Afghanis. The total increase from agricultural production is estimated at 1,536.780 million Afghanis. This is a total of 2,245.094 million Afghanis. Total cost of the five-year plan balanced against total income during the five-years of the Plan is estimated at 11,980,769,000 Afghanis.

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